The Saturday Review of Literature

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Vincent Sheean, author of "This House Against This House." *(See page 9)*

No World, If Necessary

By ELMER DAVIS

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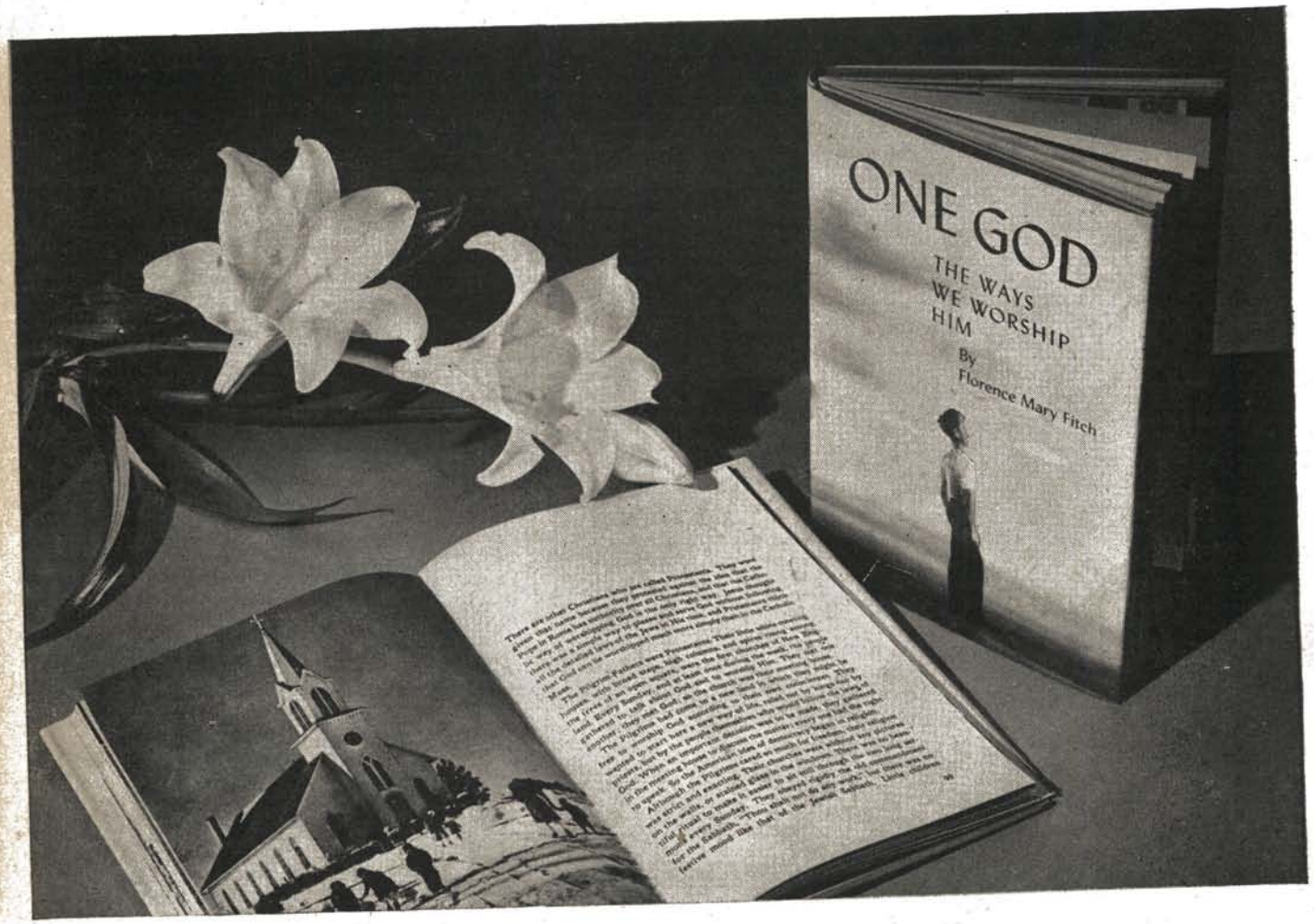

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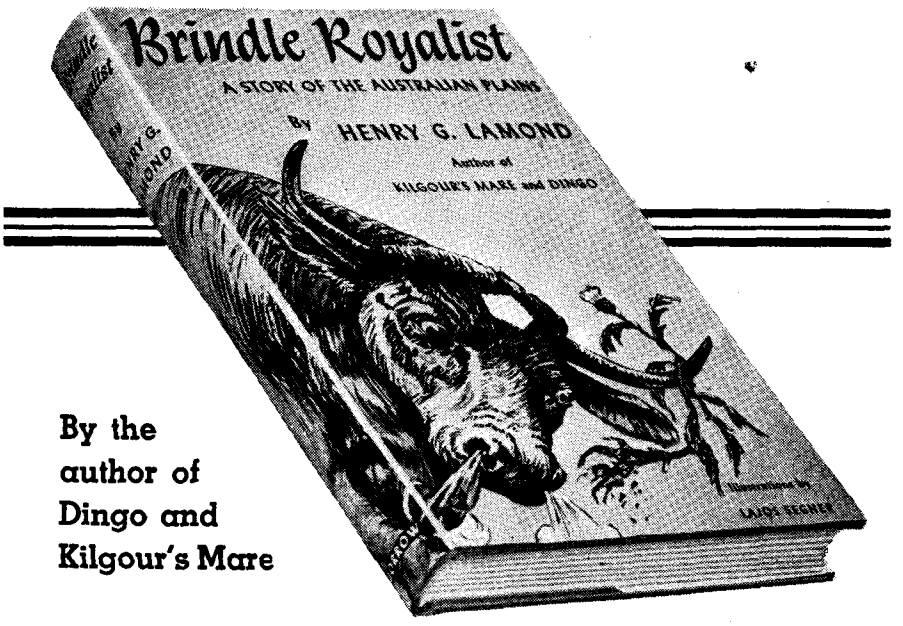

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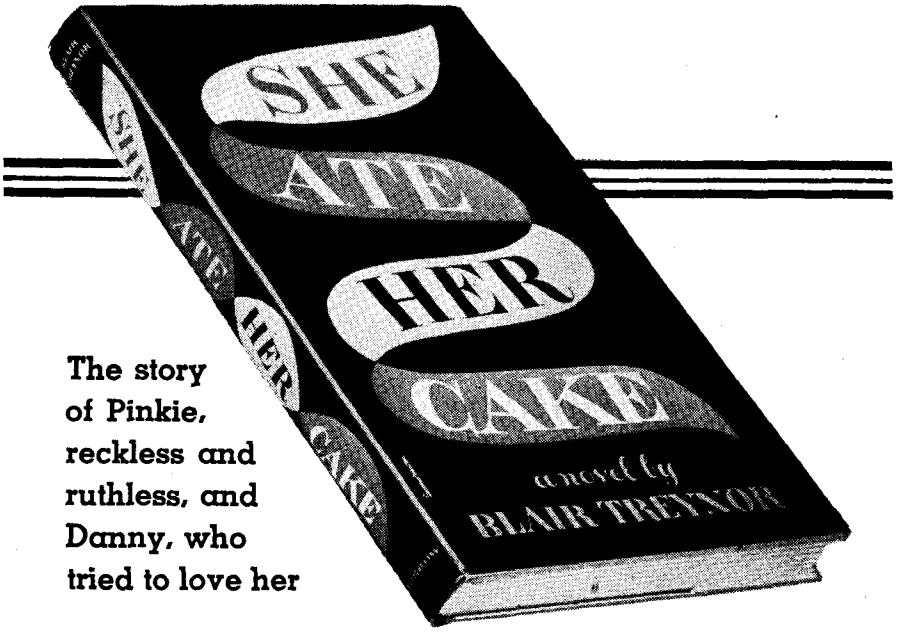

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ONE WORLD OR NONE

A Report to the Public on the Full Meaning of the Atomic Bomb

PREPARED BY 17 WORLD AUTHORITIES ON THE SUBJECT

Edited by Dexter Masters, Editor of SCIENCE ILLUSTRATED and Katharine Way, Nuclear Physicist, University of Chicago

You are a citizen of the world that is threatened by misuse of the atomic bomb. You, therefore, have a right to know the problems involved in its control. In this book you will find what those problems are, and certain workable solutions. Those very scientists who helped to develop the bomb have put their scientific work aside in order to set down for you a non-technical report that provides concrete information on the actual nature and true import of the atomic bomb, with each phase covered by the man who knows it best. The result is the most important book on the most important subject of our time, and will show you what you, as a citizen, can do *now. TIME IS SHORT, AND SURVIVAL IS AT STAKE.*

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CONTRIBUTORS

Introduction by **ARTHUR COMPTON,** *Nobel Prize Winner*
Foreword by **NIELS BOHR,** *Nobel Prize Winner*

GEN. H. H. ARNOLD
HANS BETHE
E. U. CONDON
ALBERT EINSTEIN, *Nobel Prize Winner*
IRVING LANGMUIR, *Nobel Prize Winner*
WALTER LIPPMANN, *Nobel Prize Winner*
PHILIP MORRISON
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FREDERICK SEITZ
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LEO SZILARD
HAROLD UREY, *Nobel Prize Winner*
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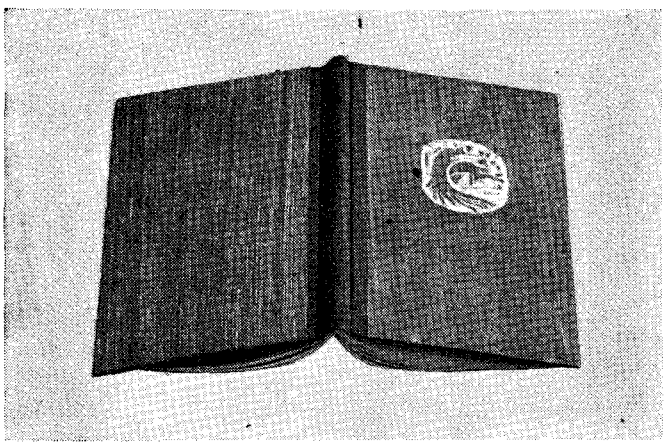

NO TWO BOOKS ever present exactly the same publishing problem. Unlike the production of refrigerators or nylon stockings, with books you never get the opportunity to sit back and repeat the operation. One of the jobs we've done this year illustrates the point. We thought we were very nearly repeating an operation when we brought out a new edition of a book which has been on our list since 1924: the authorized American edition of A. E. Housman's A SHROPSHIRE LAD. With a text as familiar and as much loved as that, there shouldn't have been any surprise in the new book. We set it in clearer type on bigger pages and gave it a handsome binding. And suddenly it was a brand new book Our earlier edition looked cramped and crabbed in comparison—entirely the wrong tone of voice for the Shropshire lad. And we realized anew how much effect the physical appearance of a book has on the reader whether he knows it consciously or not. Here was a type font appropriate to the poems, here was a page pleasing to the eye, and here was a book satisfying to hold in the hand.

A SHROPSHIRE LAD has a long and interesting publishing history in back of it, for it was first brought out in England fifty years ago in a small edition of five hundred copies paid for by the author. Two years went by before there was another edition (by another publishing house), so it is apparent that the book was not an immediate and overwhelming popular success. Perhaps the most succinct explanation of the situation is to be found in the first verse of the last poem in the volume:

I hoed and trenched and weeded,
And took the flowers to fair.
I brought them home unheeded,
The hue was not the wear.

Yet that hue became the wear if something like sixty subsequent editions and a continuous existence "in print" are any testimony

We went back to the poems with pleasure and as we read them over we felt again the quality that has made a modern classic of this little book of sixty-three brief lyrics. The simple language and the melodious verse speak directly and movingly to a large audience of readers and a wide range of literary taste. No contemporary poet has been more deeply appreciated; when he died in 1936 Housman was universally acknowledged the greatest English poet of our day

Public acclaim and recognition came slowly, but Housman did so finished and perfect a job with the type of poetry he was interested in writing and so put his own unmistakable stamp on it that it is his forever. That quality is inseparable from his stringent and flawless poetic technique but it also transcends all questions of technique. The Shropshire lad is a frame of mind.

For all the simplicity and ease with which these poems seem to be written, they are the product of an endless quest for perfection. They were subject to many revisions over a long period of time, and only when the poet's strict and demanding sense of craftsmanship was thoroughly satisfied did work on them cease. The file of our early correspondence with him contains a letter about two alterations incorporated into the English edition of the text in 1922, more than twenty-five years after the original publication of the book. Housman cared intensely about every detail of the appearance and textual accuracy of the text—to the last comma. His letters are formal and brief but a postscript to one of them reads: "In No. XXXIV line 3 there ought to be no inverted comma. The inverted comma in line 1 is right. Printers cannot understand this."

We hope the author would have been as pleased with our new edition of his book as we are. Because the physical properties of a book somehow become associated with the reader's delight in its contents we feel the greatest pride and satisfaction in the new appearance of A SHROPSHIRE LAD.

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The Saturday Review of Literature

No World, If Necessary

ELMER DAVIS

THE advent of the atomic bomb," says Professor Urey of the University of Chicago, "has caused endless confusion in the thinking of men." The book (a quickie) in which this observation occurs* is itself an instance; less in its content than in the hiatus between the content and the apparent objective of its publication. It is strong on the whereases, but nobody has coupled them up with the be-it-resolved. It gives a detailed and persuasive account of the perils of the atomic bomb—the most dangerous situation, says Urey, that humanity has ever faced. But when humanity, overcome by conviction of sin, asks, "What shall we do to be saved?", the answer is by no means so clear.

True, the epilogue of the book says that it states the problem, not the solution; but a solution is implied by the very title, and an editors' note tells us that all the authors are united in desiring "one world," and that all of them urge fair and careful consideration of the proposals herein made for achieving it. Unfortunately, no proposals are made; it is taken for granted that a league of states won't do, that we must have a world government, with limited authority but paramount in its field over individuals; in other words, there ought to be one world, and a particular kind of one world. But there is virtually no examination, of the sort that you might expect from scientists used to dealing with practical problems, of the possible methods of reaching this objective or of the difficulties in the way. It is generally recognized that one of the compensations of the atomic bomb is that it has set large numbers of scientists to thinking, for the first time, as citizens; but political thinking that gets anywhere requires certain disciplines of its own, which few scientists yet appear to have mastered.

When the authors talk as experts in their own field, however, they are convincing. No wonder, for here are most of the great names of nuclear physics—Bohr, Compton, Einstein, Langmuir, Oppenheimer, Szilard, Urey, Wigner, and half a dozen others; with a postscript ascribed to the Federation of American (Atomic) Scientists collectively. (Why the parenthesis, by the way, in the title? Are there no American scientists except atomic scientists? That is probably not what was intended but that is the way it reads.) From all this you get a pretty complete account of what the atomic bomb is and does, as well as some gratifying reassurance about what it won't do. It won't, says Oppenheimer, break loose and destroy the earth, nor make it uninhabitable; on the other hand several writers point out that the commercial utility of atomic energy, regarding which much has been said, is still some distance in the future.

Of its deadliness in war, however, there can be no question. Ridenour pretty conclusively proves that there is no effective defense; and General Arnold, Saul turning up among the prophets, takes a dim view of the possibilities of defense by counter-offensive, if the enemy hits first. All that holds back the lay reader of these chapters from complete despair is the occasional suspicion that some of the writers may be engaging in the scientific pastime of extrapolating the trends. Some of them, for instance, seem to take for granted the transatlantic (or transarctic) rocket. This is not at present feasible; but nobody can say that it will not be within a few years, and it may be felt that in a crisis of this sort a few years more or less make little difference.

THE suspicion of extrapolation is perhaps strongest in connection with E. U. Condon's discussion of "the new technique of private war"—the bomb smuggled in, looking perhaps like a crated piano, perhaps like a crated typewriter, and hidden in a store room till it is time to touch it off. Obviously you can't open every package and every suitcase in the United States to see if there is a bomb in it; nor does Condon help much by saying that while the saboteur cannot be caught the factory that makes his bomb need never exist. This implies a large, an unconcealable factory; but the talk about private war, as well as some hints in other articles, suggests that manufacture may become much easier. I do not know whether Condon set out to scare us; if so he scares us too much, for if all his implications are correct there is no hope; even though all governments became virtuous there would still remain wicked men, and—pouf! up we go.

However, this is only one of the eleven chapters which set forth the facts about the bomb and its consequences, as a preliminary to the discussion of what to do about it. The common characteristic of most of these chapters is a terrifying unawareness of politics, of the difficulty of getting things done in a field more complex than nuclear science. The outstanding exception is Langmuir; and Langmuir is the one man, in this section of the book, who talks not about world government but about agreement between sovereign states,

*ONE WORLD OR NONE. A Report to the Public on the Full Meaning of the Atomic Bomb. Edited by Dexter Masters and Katherine Way. By seventeen individual authors, and the Federation of American (Atomic) Scientists collectively. New York: Whittlesey House, The McGraw-Hill Company. 1946. 75 pp. $1.

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specifically between the United States and Russia; he is the one man, in short, who realizes that Russia is the problem. Even he seems a little on the optimistic side. He would find a basis for coöperation in matters of common agreement, to wit: "No nation desires world conquest" (maybe the Russians don't desire it, but they seem to be making pretty good progress with it in a fit of absent-mindedness); "each desires security, freedom of unemployment, better conditions for labor" (and if the Congress of the United States desires these latter blessings, many of its members fail to make themselves clear).

Nevertheless Langmuir's program seems sensible—international agreement, international inspection, destruction meanwhile of all atomic bombs and of all large plants for making their materials. (Small plants, of no military value, could take care of the needs of research.) Substantially the same program is advocated by Szilard, in the first of the chapters on what to do about it. He is hopeful of what can be done through inspection by international agreement "provided that it is possible to rule out secret violations"—a considerable exception; but the most effective inspectors, he thinks, in any country would be native scientists and engineers, not intrusive foreigners. Suppose the United States and Russia (he, too, has no illusions as to the real problem) reciprocally agreed to make no atomic bombs; and the President called on all American scientists and engineers to report to an international agency any violations of the agreement discovered in our country. Most of them, he believes, would do it.

BUT would the Russians do it? Szilard admits he doesn't know much about the Russians, but he believes . . . "differences between men in general and between scientists in particular are matters of degree," so the Russians might behave about as we would. Well, maybe; but one need not be a militarist to want better assurance than that, nor does Szilard enhance optimism by suggesting that scientists who told on their own government might be compensated by an asylum and an income abroad. However, he thinks inspection might work well enough to give us a breathing spell, in which we might be able to establish a world community, and a real world government with police powers—something he evidently regards as impossible at this stage.

Einstein is in more of a hurry; he says we must have "a supranational

—Justus in *The Minneapolis Star Journal*

The Tail Does Wag the Dog.

organization supported by a military power that is completely under its control," and that this cannot "wait for a historical development to take its course." He realizes that it cannot be done instantaneously; he would start with a steadily increasing interchange of personnel among the various national armies. This and subsequent steps, he acknowledges, would require "the utmost sagacity and tolerance"; which is hardly an overstatement.

Somebody among the scientists seems to have felt that specialists stepping outside their field had better enlist help among the specialists in the field they invade, so they have added Walter Lippmann as a guest artist "to inquire into the prospects of solving this problem, given our present knowledge of politics, government and law." It cannot be said that he contributes much—perhaps because his article, though containing some reference to later events, appears to have been written several months ago, at a time when it was still possible to speak of "the preeminence of American military power."

Lippmann thought then that if the American people decided to make the formation of the world state the principal objective of their foreign policy, many nations would immediately go along with us; and more and more of the people in all nations. He seems less hopeful now.

Why must the world state be the answer, anyway? Because, says Lippmann, collective security — enforcement by nations upon nations—doesn't work; nobody was ever willing to try it in the past, and the veto power in the United Nations charter guarantees that it will never be tried in future against a nation big enough to need much coërcing. Fortunately, however, there has in the meantime been "a revolutionary development in human relations"—the recognition of individual responsibility and liability for offenses against world peace and international law; UNO is "the constituent association of a world state already directed to establishing a universal order in which law, designed to maintain the peace, operates upon individual persons." For proof, he cites the trials of the war criminals at Nuremberg. But those men are citizens of an outlaw nation, whose government has been destroyed and whose territory has been occupied. To suppose that a procedure generally accepted in their case would be as readily accepted against Russians, Frenchmen, Englishmen, Americans who violated the regulations of an international security organization is to take a hardly discernible trend and extrapolate it clear off the chart.

WELL, what shall we do to be saved? In *The Saturday Review* of March 2 Mr. Lewis Mumford offers a sawdust trail for us to hit. We are all crazy, he says, except the atomic scientists; they have been crazy but have got over it, they are now "the awakened ones." They have been gagged by the madmen in the White House, the State Department, the Pentagon, the Capitol; but if they were not gagged they would say, "Stop making the atomic bomb—abandon it completely!" All right; in this virtually ungagged book, they have said it. . . . Further we must say to all the world (it is not clear whether this is the awakened ones talking or just Mumford, but he may be regarded as awakened for purposes of argument), "Come in and see everything we have got, to be sure we aren't holding out on you." (We ask no reciprocal privileges.) Then let the awakened ones be ungagged, and one of them set at the elbow of every man holding high public office; to whisper in his ear, as often as may be necessary, the word "humanity," the words "one world."

All right again; in this book the awakened ones not merely whisper but shout the word "humanity," the words "one world or none." But if you ask them, how do we get one world?—what are the obstacles to getting it?—who runs it after we have got it?—are there any bugs in the design that ought to be ironed out before we put it into quantity production?—why, on those points the awakened ones have little to offer. Yet those are questions that must be answered before we can be sure that the world state is the only exit,

(*Continued on page* 50)

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The Dark Road from Versailles

THIS HOUSE AGAINST THIS HOUSE. By Vincent Sheean. New York: Random House. 1946. 414 *pp.* $3.50.

Reviewed by BAUKHAGE

PERHAPS it is unfortunate (for Vincent Sheean) that this assignment to review his latest book was given to a newsman. Sheean is a reporter himself, and has met a lot of interesting people, but he is also, as author of "This House Against This House," in part an historian. Should an historian's work be reported by a reporter? A reporter's job is much harder than an historian's. An historian covers the past, which is static. He can view his subject placidly from all sides in the perspective of time.

A reporter covers the present. His subject is dynamic. Its aspects change faster than a chameleon on a plaid blouse. The present is one-dimensional. It comes upon one startlingly—without warning, like a clothesline in the dark.

"This House Against This House" begins with a searching historical analysis of the Treaty of Versailles, and ends with a study of the San Francisco Conference of the United Nations. This reporter covered Versailles, along with Harry Hansen (among others), who wrote a spot account of it in "The Adventures of the Fourteen Points." Hansen's book may well have been part of what is evidently an exhaustive bibliography upon which Sheean, who arrived on the international scene somewhat later, must have drawn. I and my colleagues didn't (we couldn't) do as good a job as Sheean has done with a quarter-century perspective.

Sheean does some reporting in his book, too, and a justifiable amount of speculation on the future, against a rich background of familiarity with the great works of the past from the Bhagavad-Gita and Plato to Hegel and Marx. It would really take an historian-philosopher-psychiatrist to analyze him properly. However, I'll rush in where reporters do not fear to tread and put a news lead on the story:

> New York, March 27.—Collaring of the majority of votes in the United Nations Organization by a British-American coalition at San Francisco was revealed today as the basis for present strained relations between the Kremlin and Washington. In a book just released by Random House, Vincent Sheean, war correspondent, author, and former Army Intelligence officer, said that when the Russian delegates at San Francisco discovered that the British and Americans could line up more votes than they could, they insisted on the amendment to the charter which permits "regional arrangements directed against the renewal of aggressive policy." The Soviet's so-called "expansion of power and doctrines" in recent months may be interpreted as implementation of this amendment.
>
> "In one rather extreme way of stating it," says Mr. Sheean, "Russia (by insisting on the amendment and clinging to the veto) exempted her own borders, and action taken there, from world authority altogether.
>
> "It will be impossible to understand Russian behavior on the international stage," he concludes, "unless the psychological causes are correctly estimated."

Of course my Procrustean "lead," lifted from page 400 of a 414-page book, is entirely unfair to a work which offers much more than one rather startling explanation of a situation now testing the sinews of our statesmen. Indeed, Mr. Sheean offers so much more that I rather wish he had built a trilogy.

Before we proceed, let me say that I have encountered Vincent Sheean three times, and seldom have I met three such different persons. The first time was in "Personal History." Here he introduces himself as a youth who, at college, was so naive that he lived for months pledged to a Jewish fraternity without knowing it was Jewish. He loafed along on the campus until he discovered that inspiring scholar, Frederick Schevil, who helped him find himself, and caused him to feel that he had been living in a community "inhabited by a couple of thousand young nincompoops whose ambition in life was to get into the right fraternity or club."

—*Rollin Kirby in the* New York World, *April* 14, 1921

Triumphal Entry Into Normalcy. (Senator Philander C. Knox fathered the resolution which created a separate peace between the United States and Germany.)

I am not sure that Mr. Sheean isn't still given to similar harsh estimates of some of his fellow men, although he mellowed considerably before he finished "Personal History" after living a lot of it through the Chinese revolution, cheek by jowl with the Soongs and Suns. He certainly studied Bolshevism respectfully under a charming American devotee in Moscow, and a tour of duty covering the Riff revolt in Africa taught him that "imperialism was murderous and hypocritical." He witnessed the birth of Fascism in Africa, and saw its first ugly blood test in Spain.

He was then a "socialist-realist"—or was it a realist socialist?—but he revealed the mystic in him by arriving at a great decision as a result of a conversation with a lady, continued after her death. That was his Moscow-American mentor, who convinced him of the truth of the syllogism:

> A controlled, egalitarian economy is desirable;
> Revolution is the only way to obtain controlled egalitarian economy;
> Therefore revolution is desirable.

(To ease the mind of the allergic, Sheean didn't go Communist, and his latest work shows him less Marxian than Jeffersonian.)

My second meeting with Sheean was in the flesh. It was at San Francisco, where he seemed to be in a daze. Later I learned this might have been due to the fact that he was fresh from the front lines. He was hired as a "commentator"—part of a stable of big names, including such Hollywood pundits as Hedda Hopper—to try to get headlines for radio when the diplomatic dateline deteriorated. He knew that, and didn't enjoy it. I didn't know that he was then adumbrating his latest chef d'oeuvre. To me, he was just six feet of celebrated something that got in the way of the working commentators.

Now for the third time I meet this versatile multi-personality in "This House Against This House," where I find him and it still somewhat disjunctive. The book is a splendid and literary production (except for one- and two-hundred-word sentences, and some repetitiousness), but it is really two or more books. It is a searching, Hegelian exposition of the mistakes of Versailles and the hopes of the United Nations. It is also a well-written and often exciting war journal. Many readers who are surfeited with the latter will warm to the former. Some who still thrill at military adventure will be bored with the company of Tagore, Marx, Plato, and Spinoza.

But no one who is interested in

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long range international policy on the one hand, or today's news from the Kremlin on the other, should miss it. Mr. Sheean is as one-worldly as Willkie, as idealistic as Woodrow Wilson, and sometimes as realistic as Stalin.

Nobody can be really objective about the contents of a book, any more than a dog can be philosophical about the contents of a butcher shop. There are some parts of "This House" that I think are good, lively reporting, and others which are excellent analysis. Excellent, I say (like the dog and the steak) because I like their conclusions.

The comment on the Treaty of Versailles, for example. After all the emotional "reasoning" of those who tried to make the crime of this document fit the punishment, it is refreshing to hear someone who dares to say that the treaty was not a "good" treaty at all: that "it was a dictated settlement which was, by and large, about as bad as it could be, because it violated every proclaimed principle and ideal without obtaining the advantages of real control over the Germans", that it has "played its great historic role in creating a new situation from which Adolf Hitler was the inevitable product"; that Wilson's Fourteen Points which were the firm basis of the offer for the armistice "could have been the basis of a just and honorable peace in which Germany might have taken her place as a member of the free association of nations" because those conditions would have encouraged the "qualities of industry, ingenuity, peaceful accomplishment which we see so admirably exemplified among millions of Americans of German origin."

Here let me hasten to add that to take these quotations out of the context may give the impression that Sheean is "pro-German." He is not. He asks no quarter for the defeated residue of Hitlerite Germany and brands them with the guilt and scorns them for not acknowledging it. He only asks that the fate of Germany be so shaped that it will mesh with the mechanism of a wholly peaceful world—consummation of which at Versailles only Wilson visualized, and even he as through a glass, darkly.

I have never heard (except from one of the principal actors in that drama) a sounder exposition of *l'affaire* Darlan. I won't retail it here. You can read it for yourself in Sheean's blunt and (to me, already convinced) completely convincing language.

I am also glad to have corroboration of my own humble opinion from a keen-eyed eye-witness to sustain the charge that our policy in Italy was an "Allied failure." If you think Sheean's support of Darlan tars him with a fascist brush, read his contempt for our conduct in Italy which, he says, bolstered a neo-fascist, mon-

archist regime, tyrannized the anti-fascists, and left the old tyrants in power, while the Communists looked on, gleefully encouraging our mistakes. If you love your *bella Italia*, you will warm to the author's tribute and lament.

Now let me atone in part, if I can, for following the technique of my trade and putting last things (on page 400) first; for saving until the end the sweetness of the nut, thus reverting to a habit of childhood, when I carefully placed in escrow the frosting of my piece of cake until the less tempting portions were done away. In any case there is Biblical precedent for keeping the good wine until the end.

This good wine which Sheean metamorphizes out of the troubled waters of misunderstanding that are now filling the cups of the world is hope. Hope that the Russians may grasp Mr. Sheean's assertion that we of the West, like Paul, are "freeborn." Hope that they will learn to tolerate Mr. Sheean's and Spinoza's affirmation that in our brand of democracy, "no one transfers his natural right so absolutely that he has no further voice in affairs; he only hands it over to the majority of a society whereof he is a unit."

This understanding will have to be a two-handled jug. We must also try to understand the supreme value Russians put on their own system of government, despite their disregard for freedom as we desire it. Mr. Sheean realizes that hurdle, but his hope does not falter. He does lament, though, that "the Western mind is so unready, indeed so unable, to make the *logical disjunction* [mine the italics] here between democracy and freedom [which latter he admits the Russians neither seek nor prize] that it falls into pathetic confusion when it attempts to understand a scheme based on that disjunction."

You who run may not read this book without stumbling, but all (including Mr. Byrnes et al.) will do well to mark Prophet Sheean's warning (in his text from "King Richard II"):

> . . . If you rear this house against this house,
> It will the wofullest division prove
> That ever fell upon this cursed earth.
> Prevent it, resist it, let it not be so,
> Lest child, child's children cry against you woe.

At the Symphony

By Theodore Spencer

OUR love has met them often. Crowding to music
They fill, like victims, concert halls; are there
Terribly there, with clothes on and combed hair;
Can we forget them, thinking only of us?

It is not pride that makes us hungrily sad,
Hungry to include their sadness inside our love.
The world we turn, the sun-drenched world we turn,
Poured all over with sun, is not their world;
But what is ours (Oh how can we include
Their grief in what is ours?), we'd share, we'd share.

Oh how, thinking of us, can we forget
What is not us? Oh how can we stretch to open
All we imagine of parenthesis
(Not merely ours, rich ours) so we include
Grief, and the hunger for music, for Now, for Us?

We must have Love so take us that great Love
Will make our imagined arms ample to enfold
(And answer, enfolding, questions they dare not ask)
All these redeemable lovely unlovely dead,
All these people, everywhere, everywhere,
Oh all these people whose sadness is our task.

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Mr. Sassoon's Progress

SIEGFRIED'S JOURNEY. 1916-1920 *By Siegfried Sassoon. New York: Viking Press.* 1946. 338 *pp.* $3.

Reviewed by BEN RAY REDMAN

THIS is the third volume of an autobiography that began with "The Old Century" and continued with "The Weald of Youth," an autobiography that has now made its leisurely way from the year 1886 down to the year 1920; that will, doubtless, if all goes according to plan, continue through several volumes more, until the gap between its author's past and present is reduced to an approximate vanishing point. And the prospect is an agreeable one, for if Mr. Sassoon spends quite a bit of his time in writing of matters of no great importance, he seldom fails us in the manner of his writing. He has been accused so often of being charming that he must be heartily tired of the description, but charming he is. With few lapses, his prose is a model of engaging simplicity, and his easy, modest demeanor, as he writes on and on about himself, converts his readers into sympathetic friends. Ever so seldom, only, is there a faint hint that behind this modesty there is calculation.

Mr. Sassoon's accomplishment as an avowed autobiographer is the more remarkable in view of the fact that he used up so much of his material in telling the story of George Sherston, before setting himself his present task. Sherston is, of course, the hero of "Memoirs of a Fox-Hunting Man," "Memoirs of an Infantry Officer," and "Sherston's Progress." Furthermore, he is, according to his creator, "a simplified version of my 'outdoor self.' He was denied the complex advantage of being a soldier-poet."

As a result of Sherston's being first upon the scene, the whole man who is Siegfried Sassoon finds himself frequently referring and deferring to the half-man in such passages as these: "My experience during the next three weeks, which ended in my being sent to a shell-shock hospital, have already been related in 'Memoirs of an Infantry Officer.' I am thankful not to be obliged to drag my mind through the details again." "That inveterate memoirizer George Sherston has already narrated a sequence of infantry experiences—from the end of 1917—which were terminated, on July 13th, by a bullet wound in the head. His experiences were mine, so I am spared the effort of describing them." This method of procedure obviously leaves considerable gaps in the autobiography, which can be filled only by reference to the earlier "fiction." For a full account of the author's one-man revolt against what he considered a senseless prolongation of the First World War, you must turn to Sherston's version; and you must go to the same source for the best of the author's fox-hunting memories. Had Sherston never been thought of, the books now appearing would doubtless have been far richer in content than they are, but what a loss Sherston would have been! He may have been no soldier-poet, but his maker spent his finest prose on him: writing that is almost sure to exhibit timeless qualities when most of the same author's once-famous war poetry has long since come to be seen as merely timely utterance.

It is with the "soldier-poet" that this third autobiographical instalment is largely concerned. We watch his war-disillusionment seeking and instinctively shaping a fit instrument of expression: the "harsh, peremptory, and colloquial stanzas with a knock-out blow in the last line." We follow him to hospital in Scotland, where another young poet shyly submits verses for his criticism—verses signed with the then unknown name of Wilfred Owen—and we see born a friendship of tragic brevity. We look on as he emerges into public view under the imprint of Heinemann and the expert guidance of Robert Ross, determined to shock a civilian public into an awareness of what war is really like, turning his fire upon the professional patriots, the Glorious Sacrifice singers, and the I-wish-I-were-young-enough-to-go boys. His Military Cross and his wound stripes gave him the right to speak, and he spoke truthfully, bitterly, sardonically, even savagely; but who will say today that he or anyone else spoke effectively? We see him eagerly widening a circle of friends and acquaintances, many of them famous, and retaining impressions that give body to some of the most interesting passages of "Siegfried's Journey." Let us, parenthetically, call a partial roll, with a brief quotation attached to each well-known name:

"If Siegfried Sassoon spends quite a bit of his time in writing of matters of no great importance, he seldom fails us in the manner of his writing."

Hardy: "Frail and rather wizard-like in the candleshine and dim room, with his large round head, immense brow, and beaky nose, he was not unlike the 'Max' caricature, but rather more bird-like." Noel Coward: "But the youthful stranger rattled brightly on, making smart remarks, which I considered cheap." Lawrence of Arabia: "When arriving at the Savoy I expected to find a conventional military character with whom I should have little in common, so the small, fair-haired, youthful-looking person to whom I was presented came as a surprise." Masefield: "His courteous and deliberative replies must have been an amusing contrast to my impetuous utterances which in those days had a habit of falling over one another almost before I had decided what I intended to say!" Robert Bridges: "After an awkward pause he told us to sit down. Then, having inquired of Masefield whether there was any credibility in the report that the German Emperor had abdicated, he glowered in my direction and gruffly made one of the most surprising remarks I have experienced. 'What did you say his name was—*Siegfried Digweed?*'" James Barrie: "He was taciturn, and I was struck by the expression of melancholy which haunted his queer facial shabbiness."

Returning to the young poet (he was not so very young, but the adjective seemed to stick), we watch his career broaden to embrace the enjoyment of diverse hospitality as proferred by Lady Randolph Churchill, Cambridge dons, the Sitwells, and Frankie Schuster, while simultaneously and somewhat incongruously that same career comprehends a flirtation with the Labor Party and the literary editorship of the *Daily Herald.*

And finally, at least for this volume, we see "England's Young Soldier-Poet" sailing to lecture in the United States, viewing that country with considerable bewilderment if not with alarm, and then sailing home again, having possessed himself of a new and dear friend in the person of

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S. N. Behrman to say nothing of a new American straw hat.

It all reads so pleasantly (and, for a certain generation, so nostalgically) that one hesitates to carp. But it seems to me—indeed, I am quite sure—that the quality of "Siegfried's Journey" is not quite up to that of "The Old Century" and "The Weald of Youth." Is it, perhaps, that at this stage of his story, the author has relied too much upon the stimulation of diary jottings, and the attractive power of famous names, instead of bringing his material to full literary life by a sustained effort of brooding memory? Whatever the answer, and whatever the exact qualitative position of this latest volume in the Sassoon corpus, there is no doubt that "Siegfried's Journey" is a most enjoyable book.

Idiosyncrasies of the Trout

UPSTREAM AND DOWN. By Howard T. Walden II. New York: The Macmillan Company. 1946. 367 *pp.* $3.

Reviewed by LEONARD BACON

MUST the hungry pass dispassionately on Brillat-Savarin? Is it right to ask the thirsty to compose a disquisition on the delicate distinctions between great wines? To demand a review of such a work as "Upstream and Down" a long month before the trout season opens is at least as inhumane. And when I had made every effort to banish the subject into the farthest wilderness of the unconscious! A plague on all editors! May they know paper shortages! May they lose corrected proofs! May they get a nasty letter from Bernard Shaw! And may such reply as they venture to make be pied in their own columns, with malice aforethought, by some avenging master of the linotype! But to the subject.

Mr. Walden's charming book came out in a limited edition in 1938 and is now made available for a larger public. It deserves to be, for it is full of really beautiful descriptions of pools and streams, and the observations on fish, fishing, and fishermen are just and frequently profound. Mr. Walden treats of many aspects of his subject, such as the origin of the passion, the various types who give way to it, their weapons and tactics, the regions where they do and suffer, times and conditions, chance and art, the strange super-normal instinct called "fish sense," great captures, the taking of trout where none should be, and the morality and ethics of the cult.

He speaks out of a much richer experience than most writers and he is pleasingly instructive with no trace of the dogmatic. Beyond that as hinted above, when his eye is on the ball, very few can paint better than he black water, for ever changing yet as constantly perpetuating its form and pressure. I shall remember with pleasure his account of his first encounter with Salvellinus Fontinalis. And the descriptions of the wonderful octogenarian master and the noble creature who had "fish sense" but was struck by lightning with a full creel leave little to desire. At such moments Mr. Walden writes as well as the next man, with graceful simplicity and natural ease.

Mr. Walden's ideas are eminently catholic and just. Like Mr. Bliss Perry he can forgive or condone the much-abused "wormer," if the latter's practical morality with respect to size and number coincides with the orthodox flycaster's. And he makes a case for the practice in streams overwhelmed by briars and fallen timbers.

Indeed, too many of us are snobs and Mr. Walden sensibly rebukes by implication our failure to bear with infirmity in others when we have not been exposed to their temptations. Does not this self-righteousness come from Abercrombie and Fitch? Nor is he less sensible on other matters, for instance, the absurd multiplicity of flies. Mr. Walden must have been almost the first to raise his voice against those meretricious confections which are devised by perverted ingenuity and far too frequently palmed off by crafty avarice on innocent ignorance.

I do not recollect that Mr. Walden anywhere in his engaging work goes into a problem that teases my limited understanding. On the river which I may be said to "know," one fly, the wet "Queen of the Waters," is five times as effective in my experience as any other fly whatever, and there are only four or five others, all sad or subdued in color, that have ever worked for me under the surface Any fly with red in it seems to be anathema on the Hathaway or Sunderland stretches, whereas in Maine the trout simply rush toward glittering and brilliant temptation—on the rare occasions when they can be tempted at all. Yet I cannot believe that the entomological life in the black holes of the Queen's River differs radically enough from that in the pools of Kennebago Stream to account for these esthetic preferences. And the fact that the dry Rat-faced McDougall, as tied by Hugh Campbell, is a killer in both paradises merely bewilders me more. I wish Mr. Walden would expatiate on these enigmas and perhaps introduce an element of rationality beyond my perplexed powers.

Thank Heaven! the 15th of April is appreciably nearer than when I began this vagarious notice of a modest and delightful study of the great art, at once dramatic and therapeutic, which, as Julian Crandall (elsewhere quoted by me) believes on the strength of unimpeachable statistics, keeps flycasters so busy that they never go to jail. As a borderline case myself, I haven't dared to look up the figures for insane asylums.

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The Lady and the Commissar:

JOHN WHARTON

"I SEE by the papers," said Mrs. Barker, as she entered the living room, "that Russia has been stirring up no end of trouble in the U.N.O."

Mr. Barker suspended for a moment his task of mixing a pre-Sunday-luncheon cocktail.

"May I say, my dear," he remarked, "that I have never objected to your habit of shutting yourself in your bedroom one Sunday a month while you pore over magazines and newspapers that are one to four weeks out of date. But I cannot prevent a feeling of irritation from rising when you speak of the things you've read as current happenings. The U.N.O., for example, adjourned a month ago."

"Oh," replied Mrs. Barker, brightly, "do you mean that all the troubles have been settled in the meantime?"

"Unfortunately, the answer to that question is a large, capital-letters NO."

"Then what difference does it make that it happened a month ago?"

Mr. Barker returned to his cocktail mixing. He felt even more irritated, because he now had the sensation that somehow or other his wife had scored off him unfairly. Women, damn them, were completely illogical but often unanswerable. Probably it had something to do with feminine intuition, in the existence of which he strongly believed. He had better let the whole thing drop.

But Mrs. Barker had no such intention.

"Tell me about Russia," she commanded, using another phrase which infuriated Mr. Barker. How could you "tell about" Russia, or, to cite some past questionings, our banking system, the labor movement, English colonial policy? You might as well ask someone to "tell you about" trigonometry. However, it was a peaceful Sunday morning and he intended to keep it so. He poured two Martinis, then answered.

"What do you want to know?"

"Well," said Mrs. Barker, "to be exact, Janie MacLellan has asked me to work with her on some Russian medical relief drive, and I'm a little doubtful about doing it. Why should we send gifts to a country so different from ours? Jim MacLellan is furious at Jane. He says we're going to have to fight Russia within twenty years and we ought to be preparing for it right now. He says that Communism and democracy can't live in the same world together."

"Jim MacLellan is an ass," said Mr. Barker, glad to find an outlet for his irritation. "Communism is an economic system; democracy is a political system. Anyone who can read without moving his lips ought to know that. If he had said the capitalist countries couldn't live in the same world with the Communist countries, that would at least be an understandable statement. But my answer would be that they damn well better learn how to, or there won't be any world for either of them to live in."

"But Russia isn't a democracy," insisted Mrs. Barker. "I see by the papers that in their recent elections, there was only one name on the ballots."

"Look here," he replied, "I don't want to get pushed into the position

of defending the Russian system. I think it is fundamentally wrong. But that does not mean that I understand why the Russians think it's right, and until I do, I'd simply be a warmongering imbecile to go around saying that we must fight the Russians. For example, I do believe the Russians think they are democratic. Their theory of democracy is different from ours, but they still believe they have the democratic idea."

"Oh, explain that, will you. That sounds interesting."

"Well, it would take quite a lot of time."

"We have lots of time. Cook is always late with Sunday lunch. Hand me my knitting bag, will you, dear."

Mr. Barker arose, picked up the bag and took it to her, but a grim look covered his face as he did so. One of his special hatreds was to have any woman ask him to explain anything while she was knitting. Invariably, at the crux of the matter, she would find something wrong and call for time out while she went through an endless and mysterious counting process. However, he was interested in this Russian question and he decided to go on.

"As far as I can make out," he said, "the Russians take the position that democracy doesn't necessarily mean that you must always have a choice of two people to vote for. That's just an American idea, and a modern idea, at that. In the first days of our republic, people didn't vote directly for either of two candidates for president —in fact, we still go through the form of choosing electors—and in my own lifetime I can remember when they didn't vote directly for senators. But we still thought of ourselves as a democracy."

"But we always voted for our mayors and aldermen, didn't we?"

"Yes, but I've been told that the Russians vote in much the same way for their local commissars. For example, when it is decided that any community should have an art commissar, the artists in that community meet and choose him just the way a New England town-meeting chooses its selectmen."

"Really!" said Mrs. Barker. "But then why do they have only one name on the national ballots?"

"Well, I don't understand that exactly, and I doubt if anyone over here does, but here is a possible argument. The objective of democracy is to permit the people to express their will. Americans and Englishmen think the best way to do this is to have two or more political parties so that people have a choice of candidates, but in the economic field we have almost no method for the people to express their views. The Russians are more concerned with trying to build up an economic democracy. Every Russian is taught that that is the one great ideal in life. So they need only one political party, because the only function of a political party is to promote economic democracy.

"The one political party in Russia is the Communist party, and it picks all candidates for national office. Often it picks people who aren't inside members of the Communist party. The picked candidates are the only people who can get elected. After they are elected, their renomination depends, not on whether they can get an appropriation to build a new post office in their community, but whether the inside ruling clique of the Communist party thinks they have served the economic interests of the country *as a whole* in an able manner. That gives them quite a different viewpoint on national legislation from the viewpoint held by a lot of our Congressmen, and perhaps a better one."

"But why hold so-called elections at all?"

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"Well, the theory there is that it gives the people a chance to express approval or criticism of the legislators. True, you can't vote for *your* own candidate, but if you cross off the name of the official candidate, that's a protest vote. Theoretically, if fifty-one per cent of the people cast protest votes, the government would change its policies at once."

"Theoretically," said Mrs. Barker, contemptuously. "In practice, Stalin does what he chooses. What good is a theory, if you don't put it into practice?"

"A theory can be more important than most people will admit. I think the Russian voting theory is ridiculous because in practice only one party counts the votes and they can make the election come out any way they please. However, just consider how badly some of our theories work. In theory we are supposed to choose our local representatives, but did you ever see a meeting of the voters of the 15th Congressional District to select candidates for Congressman? No, the local boss puts up a candidate, and occasionally a rival to the boss puts up a candidate and then the *registered* voters have a primary in which they can pick one of two hack politicians. There is a case where in practice the Russian system of picking an art commissar is probably more democratic than ours. Take some other examples. Our theory of unlimited debate is fine, but try to explain a Senate filibuster to a Russian. Or try to explain to him how a Southern senator can be elected by five per cent of the people in his state. Or how a senator who had been decorated by Hitler could be chairman of an important committee during a war with Germany."

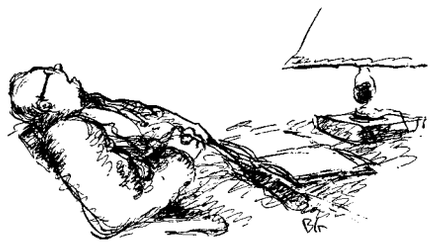
"My goodness, you're beginning to sound like a fellow traveler. Make me another cocktail."

He rose to do so, but he was warmed up to his subject and refused to be interrupted.

"I won't sound like a fellow traveler when I make my next statement. I said that theory was important and here is why. A theory may work badly in practice for a long time, but when people get roused enough they can insist on its being lived up to. Over here, for example, when enough people get mad enough to do something about it, they can take control away from the professional politicians and choose and elect their own candidates. In Russia they could only do it by armed revolution. That's an almighty big difference when the time comes round for the big chips to go down."

"Is that why you think the Russian system is fundamentally wrong?"

"No, my objection goes even deeper than that. Marxian communism rests on the philosophical assumption that men and women act only from economic motives. Therefore, as long as a commissar makes the right economic decisions he's serving his country



well. Hence you have the anomaly of a totalitarian police state pledged to promote the welfare of all citizens. I don't believe in that philosophical assumption and neither do the bulk of the American people. If there ever is a war between the two countries, it will, in my opinion, come out of that fundamental difference."

"Oh, so you think there will be a war," she said, somewhat absently. "Then I suppose I shouldn't join Janie's committee."

"I didn't say that," he answered, again irritated, for he detected the beginnings of a fixed stare at the knitting. "I insist that we must and can find a way to live in the same world."

"How would you do it? Tell me about that."

He drained his second cocktail, and warmed up to his subject.

"If I *knew* how to prevent war, I'd run for president. The best I can do is a suggestion that might *help* to prevent it. That suggestion is for all of us to try to learn some more facts about Russia, and, until we do, stop this asinine talk about having to go to war with them. Really, when I think of the colossal ignorance on which our policy toward Russia—and theirs toward us—is based, I'm not only staggered. I'm terrified. What's the matter with us? Haven't we yet learned that the one thing people can agree upon is the truth? And that when people agree on what the truth is, they somehow or other seldom get into a fight?

"If Russia, England and the U.S.A. —let alone any other countries— would appropriate one-tenth of what they are going to spend on atomic bombs for an informational campaign about each other, your chances of peace would jump by leaps and bounds. I don't mean just sending correspondents back and forth. I mean bringing ten or twenty thousand Russian citizens, preferably young ones, over here every year and sending the same number of Americans to Russia. Give them guaranteed free access to native citizens; encourage observation, argument, social relations. Let them visit Congress, our courts, our political clubs, our factories. Let our people do the same in Russia, and let Stalin and his gang grant the Russian citizens complete immunity for anything they say to, or do with, such visitors. Then they might find out what our ideals are and why we deviate from them, and we might find out what they are trying to do and how far short of it they are falling. Out of it all might come some general agreement on what are the faults and virtues of both peoples, and that might afford us a basis to enable us to work for our goals without the need of trying to annihilate the other.

"But if all we can learn depends on the vaporings of foreign correspondents, each with his prejudice pro or anti; and if all they can learn is what the Commissar of Education chooses to tell them; well, then the chance of mud-slinging being followed by atom-bomb slinging is much better than an even bet. And sending them medicine, or food, or tractors won't help much unless some attempt at understanding goes with it. Ignorance begets suspicion; suspicion begets fear; and when the fear gets strong enough, someone is going to feel that he'd better be first to drop the bombs."

"Would you mind repeating that again?" asked Mrs. Barker. "Something's gone wrong with my design and I was trying to figure out where I made the error. I think I'm going to have to pull out about six rows, worse luck."

Mr. Barker shrugged his shoulders.

"Don't think I could repeat it. And it's probably not worth repeating. Just a minute, I'm going to get my cigarette holder."

When he returned to the room, she was on the telephone.

"Janie, I've decided to help you out on that Russian committee of yours. I had a long talk with George about it and he says that perhaps our only chance of preventing war is to work on things like this so that the Russians and ourselves can get some understanding of each other. Isn't that an interesting idea?"

He was about to interrupt and insist that he had said no such thing. But he decided not to; it would only lead to another argument in which she would prove to her own satisfaction that he had advanced exactly that proposition. What was more, maybe, considering present circumstances to be what they are, she had intuitively hit on a proposition that was, at this moment, as good as any other to work on.

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An Adolescent's Four Days

THE MEMBER OF THE WEDDING. *By Carson McCullers. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company.* 1946. 195 *pp.* $2.50.

Reviewed by GEORGE DANGERFIELD

THIS is Carson McCullers's third book; and we have now, I should think, sufficient evidence for remarking that, while there are quite a few writers who unfortunately resemble her, she fortunately resembles nobody else. She is unique.

"The Member of the Wedding" is, more or less, the story of four days in the life of Frankie Addams: how she had become "an unjoined person who hung around in doorways"; how the thought of her brother's approaching wedding gave her a sense of sharing in the world again; how she went out into the town to test this new feeling with rather violent consequences; how she talked around and around the subject of the wedding when she was at home; how the wedding, eventually, was a ghastly failure for her; and how Frankie grew up.

But to write about "The Member of the Wedding" in this way is like writing about a tent pole and forgetting to describe the tent.

But it would be extremely difficult and quite unnecessary to make an adequate précis of this (as the publishers and perhaps the author like to label it) novella. It is not just a study of adolescence. Frankie Addams, it is true, conforms to a possible pattern of behavior. She does nothing which a twelve-year-old girl might not do. Yet the further you read into "The Member of the Wedding" the more you realize, it seems to me, that Frankie is merely the projection of a problem that has nothing much to do with adolescence.

The three chief characters are Frankie herself, her six-and-a-half-year-old cousin John Henry, and the thirty-eight-year-old, one-eyed cook Berenice. At times these three personages behave as if, indeed, one was twelve, one six and a half, and one thirty-eight; but generally they are beings of no special age, discoursing in what appears to be a dream or trance. Their problem is elementary, unanswerable, and common to all age levels. Here is the crux of it:

> "I know, but what is it all about? People loose and at the same time caught. Caught and loose. All these people and you don't know what joins them up. There's bound to be some sort of reason and connection. Yet somehow I can't seem to name it. I don't know." "If you did you would be God," said Berenice. "Didn't you know that?"

In other words, the problem which obsesses them is human loneliness: the basic problem which Virginia Woolf, after years of investigation, could only state in terms of "here is one room, there another." Miss McCullers states it in its most undifferentiated form; places it in this light and in that; looks at it savagely, gleefully, tenderly; seems almost to taste it and to roll it round her tongue; but never attempts to find an answer.

Indeed, what makes this story so unusual is the fact that most of it takes place through the medium of desultory conversations between three really weird people sitting in an even weirder kitchen. Nothing or almost

—From the drawing by Vertès

"There are other writers in the contemporary field who are of more importance than Carson McCullers. Of her it should be sufficient to say, again, that she is unique."

nothing occurs here, and yet every page is filled with a sense of something having happened, happening, and about to happen. This in itself is a considerable technical feat; and, beyond that, there is magic in it.

The words used above—"dream," "trance," "loneliness,' "weird," "magic"—are such as are generally applied to work which has severe limitations. I would be the last to deny that Miss McCullers has hers. It must be obvious to everyone who has read her books that her art excludes many important things with which the artist today is rightly preoccupied. It is an exclusive art, not out of choice but out of necessity: not because it does not wish to include but because it cannot.

She is a suggestive rather than an eloquent writer, and often seems to present us less with a meaning than with a hint. And yet the lines of her work are clear and firm. I do not know how this is done; but my ignorance will not deter me from attempting to provide an explanation.

Though she has an acute observation, she does not use it to make rounded people. Her characters invariably remind one of faces one *may have* seen, in a dream perhaps, in a tabloid newspaper possibly, or out of a train window. Their clothes, their gestures, their conversations are selected with an admirable eye and ear to verisimilitude; but the actual inhabitants of these clothes, gestures, and conversations are not themselves quite human. In fact, this book seems more and more to insist that it is, as it were, a monologue furnished with figures.

For Carson McCullers's work has always seemed to me to be a form of self-dramatization. It is true that this can be said of most immature fiction. But Miss McCullers is both a mature and fine writer. She does not dramatize herself in the sense that she is merely autobiographical; but she does dramatize herself in the sense that she seems to invest the various sides of her personality with attributes skilfully collected from the outside world.

From this point of view, "The Member of the Wedding" is a masquerade; but a serious, profound, and poetic masquerade in which the Unconscious (or the Subconscious or whatever you wish to call the subliminal personality) expresses itself, now through the voice of Frankie Addams, now through that of John Henry, now through that of Berenice Sadie Brown. The other characters, who certainly belong to the real world, hover round the edge of this extraordinary monologue, with one foot in it and one out; behaving with none of the awkwardness which you might expect from them in such circumstances, but adding richness to the story and relating it to more normal fiction.

I suppose that I have not yet made it clear that this is, to my mind, a marvelous piece of writing. Not merely does it sustain the interest all the way through, but it does so under circumstances which demand the utmost delicacy and balance from the author.

The book avoids what T. E. Lawrence called "the kindergarten of the imagination" on the one hand; on the other hand, it never becomes a mere sequence of neurotic images. It steers a wonderful middle course between these two morasses. It is a work which reveals a strong, courageous, and independent imagination. There are other writers in the contemporary field who are of more importance than Carson McCullers. Of her it should be sufficient to say, once again, that she is unique.

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Tragic Londoners

NIGHT AND THE CITY. By Gerald Kersh. New York: Simon & Schuster. 1946. 222 *pp.* $2.75.

Reviewed by NATHAN L. ROTHMAN

ONE thing I have learned from this novel is that Mr. Kersh is a good writer. This is probably no news to those who have read his work before—there have been three or four other books, I believe—but Mr. Kersh is new to me, and the impact of his keen and crafty writing is a gratifying experience. He has the gift of words, for turning them into fresh arrangements for their best use. He has had acquaintances with some of the more sinister places and some of the less pleasant people of this earth, and he has spread them before us (splashed might be the better word) most vividly, in a mood strangely composed of humor and anger.

These phonies and pimps and crooks of London amuse him; also, they offend him, somewhere where he keeps his esthetics or his morals, it is hard to tell which. Therefore he lashes out at them constantly with an astringent wit. They may gull their simple victims with a certain hilarious gusto that Mr. Kersh does not deny them, but they do not thereby escape his own harsh contempt. I think it comes to this: that Mr. Kersh is a moralist, working grimly in Mr. Hammett's and Mr. Cain's and Mr. Burnett's field. They aren't moralists. Their crooks and villains are really valiant and—if you want to face it honestly—attractive people, who may be played on the screen by Clark Gable or Humphrey Bogart. But Mr. Kersh's rascals are quite another matter.

Consider Harry Fabian, who moves most dominantly through this book. He is as repellent a creature as you are likely to meet between covers. He has the qualities of an intelligent and articulate rat. Having learned, as he sees it, that the world is composed of "sparrers and 'awks" (this is a phrase out of another book, but Harry Fabian would have delighted to use it) he has determined to be a hawk, which means, in his terms, to wear fancy clothes and strut about, to pretend to be a tough and omniscient American from Hollywood, although he is a Cockney, to cheat and betray and prey upon anybody less predatory than himself. He is, in fact, more like a vulture. He lives upon the bodies of others, by exploitation and blackmail, and always in cowardice, cringing in fear before any of those other exploiters who are really tough whereas he is in reality only rotten.

And of course, as in all moralities, he is consumed at last by the heaping up of his crimes. He actually seems to be preparing his own end, surrounding himself with such a complexity of plot and counterplot, so victimizing everybody that no friend or loophole anywhere is left to him; and his whole world collapses upon him at last, in a crashing climax. Every finger points at him, and every voice curses, like the settings for a final judgment. It is pat, contrived, even melodramatic. I do not believe Mr. Kersh's story, in its over-all design, is quite as good as the virtuosity of some of its parts; I am thinking of such things as the portraits of Vi, the night-club hostess, and Figler, the split-second financier; the wrestling match between Kration, the Greek, and Ali, the grand old heroic Turk; the hot pursuit of Harry Fabian after the little man he is blackmailing; and a lot of separate, vivid, brilliantly-lit scenes of London night-life that leave after-images upon the mind. Which is saying, once again, that Mr. Kersh is a good writer, that he is wonderful to read, and that if he gets hold of a really big and intense story to tell, he may give us a first-class book.

Neurotics on the Loose

THE INTRUDERS. By Robert Bright. New York: Doubleday & Co. 1946. 306 *pp.* $2.50.

Reviewed by THEODORE M. PURDY

MR. BRIGHT'S new novel deals with the emotional stresses and strains developed within the walls of a small private clinic or nursing home in a Southwestern town. The clinic and its surroundings are the scene of some highly melodramatic goings-on. It is owned and run by a fine old Southern gentleman who also happens to be a doctor. He is assisted by three younger men, ineffectually by a nephew who is a bad carbon copy of himself, and more ably by a refugee diagnostician from Europe and a brilliant Northern surgeon. The intruders of the title are, of course, the two strangers, but the essential conflict, curiously, is not between the local talent and the newcomers, but between the two strangers. One has a secret which the other discovers—and eventually gives away with tragic results.

The chief themes are racial tolerance and the ethics of the medical profession. Mr. Bright's book obviously cannot be expected to say the last word on either of these favorite current preoccupations of our novelists, but he does exploit them fully and is almost too anxious to show us new angles. The refugee from Nazism, for instance, finally delivers a Negro to Southern justice in spite of his first-hand knowledge of European parallels. In doing this he thinks he is safeguarding the happiness and future of his half-Jewish daughter. Equally complicated is the case of Dr. Vadso's neurotic female patient, who though stricken with a mysterious and fatal disease manages to have love affairs with three out of the four doctors attached to the clinic.

It would take an extremely able writer to make people such as these seem wholly convincing or alive on any except their own particular plane of hopped-up emotionalism. It is a compliment to Mr. Bright to say that he almost brings off the trick. The writing is very good, and the tautness of plot, the compact construction, and the macabre atmosphere combine to render the book stimulating and at times moving. The author is adept at conveying the psychology of the doctor-patient relationship. His portrait of the neurotic Sheila Frederick is superb, and Dr. Vadso is only a shade less interesting in his pathological way. The two Southerners, uncle and nephew, are less successful. They always remain caricatures.

With all his exceptional qualities as writer and analyst, Mr. Bright should have a future. There is a certain lack of the common touch, however, in this story. It seems the hothouse product of an active but forced imagination, and though not without fascination in the end it becomes pretty unbelievable.

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Child of Nature

BLUE BOY. By Jean Giono. New York: The Viking Press. 1946. 251 *pp.* $2.75.

Reviewed by HARRISON SMITH

JEAN GIONO'S "Jean le Bleu" appeared in France fourteen years ago. That it has been too long withheld from the American admirers of "The Song of the Wind" and "Harvest" is apparent from this poetic and stirring translation by Katherine Clarke, for it is a novel of great charm and imaginative force. It seems to distill by some magic the odors of the earth, of animals and men, and to bring forth the essential qualities and nature of the village and country folk who live passionately in its pages. Giono is a great prose poet of nature, as pagan as a faun. His style has been labeled rustic, which connotes a certain clumsiness and heaviness like a cart pulled by heavy oxen. Actually, it is liquid, as full of sensuous power as a warm wind, and as enchanting as some drug that lightens and opens the heart and mind to the infinite delicacies and nuances of sensibility that are concealed for the ordinary mortal beneath the features which man uses as a mask to conceal his inner being. Giono is an admirer of simple country people and has created a philosophy of nature which is expressed throughout the book. Everything in it, to quote one of his own lines, "has its weight of blood, of substance, of taste, of odor, of sound.

"Blue Boy" has the form of an autobiography, and it describes the childhood and youth of the son of a philosophic cobbler in a village in southeastern France, Monosque, in fact, where he was born, and to which he retired when the Germans invaded his country. If this novel actually portrays the boyhood of the author, he was certainly one of the most fortunate of children. On the second floor of the cobbler's house was his mother's laundry, filled with the fresh warm odor of starched and ironed linen, and inhabited by a succession of cheerful, chattering girls who loved to caress him and send him out shining and neat into the street. On the floor above his elderly father sat bent over his shoemaker's bench, the village philosopher and radical, the spiritual healer to whom rustics and shepherds came with their troubles and their sins; above that lay the warehouse which echoed like the empty hull of a ship. In the dark courtyard at the side of the house, sheep were massed waiting for the butcher, and the poorest of people lived and suffered behind the dirty windows that were framed by the walls. The boy was thrust into scenes of dirt and violence and into the pure beauty of flowering gardens. Always the shrewd and kindly eye of his father watched him growing, observed and fed his expanding mind, his intense sensual apprehension of the scenes and emotions that flowed past him. He revealed to his son beauty and terror, as when he took him to see a paralyzed man who was slowly being eaten by rats; when he sent him to the country to live for six months among the shepherds, or when

Jean Giono "is a great prose poet of nature, as pagan as a faun."

the boy went daily to listen to two old musicians discoursing sweetly on the flute and the violin. The music the boy hears could not have had the unearthly beauty described by Giono, nor could the life of the village had the blood-stirring quality with which he injects the orderly procession of its days and nights.

The novel has this dual appeal to the reader. He sees everything through the heightened imagination of a gifted boy and through his innocent eyes, and at the same time he senses the duller reality and the vulgar passions underneath. The first book that his father gave the boy to read was "The Odyssey" and at the same time he was tutored into whatever mysteries of life or philosophy his young mind wished to explore by a wise and thoughtful man who was under an obligation to his father. When Jean becomes a man he tastes the pleasures of love with one of the girls in his mother's laundry with no one to reproach him or to call him evil. That the boy is Giono himself is obvious and especially in the section devoted to his understanding of his own deep-rooted sensuality; for no one whose mind was not as alert as a butterfly's wings to every sound or breath of wind, could have written this book. "Blue Boy" might very well be a study in how to bring up a talented child so that he might become a genius.

The book is not entirely somber, lyrical, and ecstatic. It contains scenes of true comedy, like the story of a baker's wife who ran away with a shepherd which Giono has made into an amazingly natural and unaffected motion picture, and also there is the story of the gay shepherds who break into a rustic dance, beat up the dancing farmers, snatch their girls from them and ride away on galloping horses across the fields. There is a Homeric touch about this brutal and gaudy story that is not lacking in other scenes in the novel. At the very end the boy has grown up, is drafted into the First World War, and the reader glimpses the hatred of war which Giono was to develop as a major theme in his later work. He writes: "Ah! How willingly would I give away that false name (France) that one single one of those dead, the simplest, the most humble, might live again! Nothing can be put into the scale with the human heart. . . . There is only one glory—in being alive."

Jean Giono began to pour out his eloquent and lyrical novels, one almost every year, from 1930 to the beginning of the Second World War. During the years of invasion he could not, apparently, recapture his belief in nature and the men and women who toils in the fields, for his only creative work was a translation of "Moby Dick" and a small volume on Melville. It is apparent that more of these earlier books should appear in English.

Geometrician

By David Morton

THIS acre that was Space,
Primordial . . unconfined,
Is given form and place
By the compulsive mind.

Here is a homing field
Wherein the mind may rest
Or labor for the yield
Of thought, no more oppressed

By limitless, inane
And bland immensity;
Here thought is safe—and sane
And learns a way to see
What may and may not be

(Once, thus, the word was said
That chaos feared—and fled)

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A Chronicle of 1933

THE LONG YEAR. By Ann Chidester. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. 360 *pp.* $2.75.

Reviewed by NANCY GROBERG

THE year, "the long year," is 1933—a year of unemployment, and social unrest, of a new figure on the presidential scene, of much speculation and doubt, of wistful, uneasy workingmen and their families. It is in this year that Kay Hasswell, ruthless and enterprising businesswoman, leaves New York to take over the family's factory from her brother, invades High Falls, Minnesota, and proceeds, in her role as the infallible returning daughter, to play havoc with the big-little lives of the town. In a warm, clear-sighted, and sensitive novel, Miss Chidester resurrects those times and their victims. And, more important, by showing how one selfish, ambitious life may touch and ruin a weaker one, by illustrating the effects of the cold-blooded drive which motivates one woman, she gives substantial meaning to the now very familiar dictum of one John Donne.

It is to Miss Chidester's great advantage that her thesis alone is durable enough to make her book a gratifying experience, for her story is by no means new. The ambitious, materialistic Kay Hasswell has appeared in one guise or another ever since the first social literary conscience found expression in modern America. The ruin which she brings to small lives has long been decried. The accessory characters—an adoring niece whose life Kay tries to pattern after her own, the young fighter whom this girl loves and almost loses, the progressive and popular school teacher who, as a threat to Kay's security, is voted out of his position by the Kay-fearing, job-loving desperate members of the school board, all the workers whose families live constantly in the shadow of unemployment—these very intense people are, when you get down to it, not new instruments, not new symbols.

But Miss Chidester has a great deal of insight, a great deal of warmth, and in what is almost too fluent a manner, she exorcises well her grievances. There is something worth while about any writer who, seizing upon a strong and always timely thesis, is able to see clearly into the lives in which it finds proof, is able to understand and make her reader understand each life, is able, then, to coördinate all the lives into a coherent, clear-sighted story. Miss Chidester is not afraid to wander; in the course of her novel we intrude upon many a small town existence, take upon our shoulders the burden of many a character—yet we are always returning to the source

of situations, and we never lose sight of the core of her story. This ability to coördinate, this coupled scope and perspective, are the marks of competent and worth while writing.

All this is certainly not to say, however, that Miss Chidester has produced a great novel. Despite the broadness of her scope, the vitality of her characters, the durability of her thesis, there is something lacking. We feel it constantly—that somehow, with all these ingredients, the book does not manage to hit a very high mark. And this feeling may be attributed, I think, to our familiarity with just about everything in the book. We are, of course, familiar with the theme; we are, in a sense, familiar with the people; and we are even familiar with the style. For, fluent as she is, Miss Chidester lacks genuine individuality; her method is a rhythmical, word-fondling, almost pseudo-poetic manner, one which, I think, has been overdone in recent years. And I, for one, am tired, tired, of being taken into small towns and introduced to intense local characters. I do not renege—the book is certainly worth the effort and the reading—but, as a combination of familiar theme and familiar method, it proves again that the oldest theme demands nothing less than the newest treatment.

How Not To Pick A Wife

BECAUSE OF MY LOVE. By Robert Paul Smith. New York: Henry Holt & Company, Inc. 1946. 185 *pp.* $2.50.

Reviewed by WILLIAM S. LYNCH

IT just goes to show what can happen to a young man who hangs around Third Avenue bars. We already know from the wry and quaint bits which dot our urban periodicals that you meet the most interesting people there. But it is now apparent that a Third Avenue pub is the last place from which to select a spouse. Look what happened to Joe Newman. Instead of going straight home from the Lexington Avenue office in which he worked or instead of frequenting the nice red leather and chromium saloons which line that road, he had to go to the smarter bistros of the East for his five o'clock pause that refreshes.

There he first saw his love, Helen, red-haired and husky-voiced, secretary to a big shot in the chemical industries. Taking advantage of those aids to modern love, the telephone, the package store, the night club, and the charge account, Joe wooed her and he won. But, ah me! There is less to this than meets the eye. Helen has a father and the familiar shade of Oedipus complexes things. Joe's father had died when Joe was only eight but he has difficulty getting asleep until he induces in his mind the image of his home town and the old homestead. Between psychology and economics Joe has a tough time. Apartments in New York come high, liquor costs have risen, and the florist refuses to extend credit. Old Man Straub, Helen's father, has a good business in Yonkers, Joe likes him, and so despite a few shudders by Helen, they go out there to live.

As if it were not enough to live in Yonkers, Helen's father has the damnedest contraption for sawing wood in his cellar. Read that part carefully. The electric hookup between light and sawmill is complicated enough to need a blueprint. In any event, nice old Mr. Straub gets it in the neck in about as nasty a way as has been thought up of late.

Some people are going to like this story. They are going to like it because it is short. It is in fact what bookmen lovingly call a novella. They are going to like it because they liked the author's two earlier exercises, "So It Doesn't Whistle" and "The Journey." If you like a soupcon of abnormal psychology you will like it too. And then the book has style. In fact it is all style, crisp and colloquial, elliptical and skeletal. There must be dozens of ultra-literary and self - consciously arty quarterlies whose reviewers will find Mr. Smith a delight. Some of us like literary ways that give their characters more than paper-doll depth, that imbue them with the importance and reason for concern which is the essence of all truly realized literary creatures, even when they are drawn from "the little people" of Manhattan.

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He Took the Camera to War

MR. LINCOLN'S CAMERA MAN—MATHEW B. BRADY. By Roy Meredith. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. 1946. 368 *pp.* $7.50.

Reviewed by MARGARET LEECH

THE forerunner of the great newsreel trucks and efficient camera units of modern warfare was a four-wheeled wagon, covered with gray tarpaulin and fitted to serve as a travelling darkroom. Two horses were required to draw this clumsy vehicle, for its black-draped interior was weighted with big, cumbersome cameras, heavy negative boxes, glass plates, plate-holders, tripods, and chemical tanks. Soon after the outbreak of the Civil War, Mathew Brady, the most celebrated portrait photographer of his day, ordered two of these wagons built to his design, and after securing permission to travel in the Union army wagon train, he set out in July of 1861 for Manassas, resolved to do what no man had ever done before—carry a camera to the front lines of a battlefield.

His project required more courage and determination than can now be easily understood. In 1861, cameras were still a novelty, operated by experts in sky-lighted studios, where the subject stiffly endured the long exposures with his head held in a rigid metal clamp. "Brady of Broadway" had won his fame as a daguerreotypist. He had changed to the "wet-plate" method only in 1856, when he was joined by Alexander Gardner, an English daguerreotypist who was skilled in the new process. Gardner also introduced a method of enlarging photographs, and Brady's Imperials, as the enlargements were called, became the fashion. Only the well-to-do could afford them, for the Imperials were expensive, running as high as seven hundred dollars for a single print.

The wet-plate process was a landmark in the development of photography. The plate was sufficiently sensitive to permit comparatively short exposures and smaller lens diaphragm openings than those previously in use. Its commercial advantages over daguerreotypy were tremendous. The daguerreotype was a single direct, positive image which could be reproduced only by copying, usually by woodcuts or lithographs. The wet-plate resulted in a negative from which any number of prints could be struck.

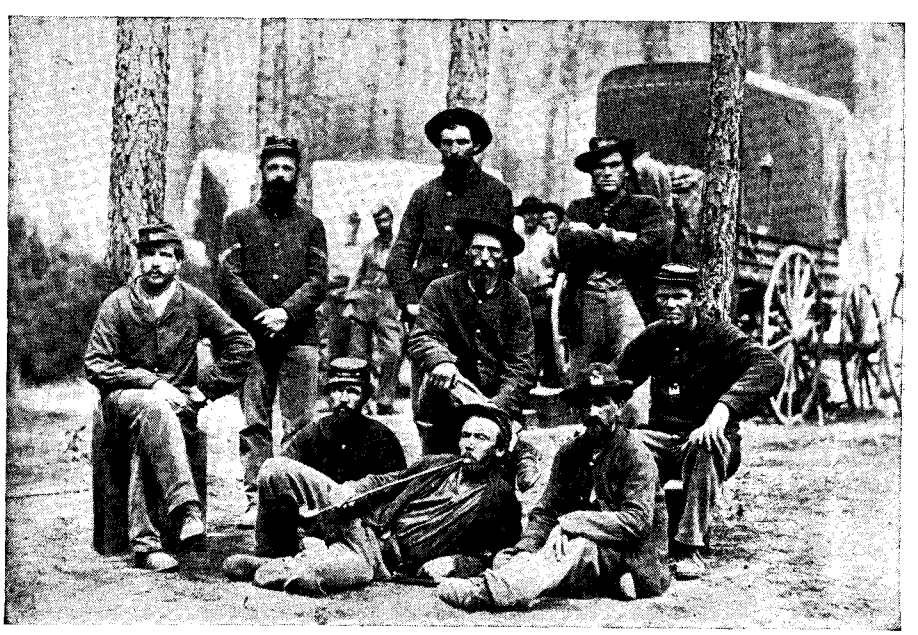
It was the wet plate process which enabled Brady to become a pioneer in war photography. Yet its disadvantages for this use were great. There was a dearth of trained operators. The heavy equipment made a serious transportation problem, and the big glass plates were fragile. Moreover, the preparation and developing of the plates seemed to offer almost insuperable obstacles to photography in the field. Both processes had to be carried on in darkness, the one immediately before, the other promptly after the exposures were made. These tasks were performed either in the photographer's wagon or in a portable black tent which he lugged with his other equipment to the front. In camp, when the day was over, the weary cameramen had still to wash and dry and varnish their negatives by lantern light.

Brady was caught in the rout of First Bull Run, but he brought one of his wagons back to Washington; and, though his equipment was damaged and some of his negatives were broken, he salvaged enough pictures to make a little exhibition in his Washington gallery. His experience convinced him—and other photographers—that his idea was practical, and he proceeded to order new equipment and organize a force of operators. To the wonder and admiration of the Union, it was possible to view and purchase scenes made in camp and on the battlefield. The vast quantities of photographs which record the Civil War were not all made by Brady or even by his operators, but his was the inspiration and the first experiment.

All this (and much more) is told by Roy Meredith in his large, handsome book, "Mr. Lincoln's Camera Man." He has had access to Brady's own scrapbook of press clippings, to his lecture book, and to some private correspondence, and his book succeeds in enlisting the reader's interest in Brady himself, as well as in his work.

Although Brady was indubitably a fine artist, he was also a supersalesman, tireless in wangling sittings from the celebrities whose portraits were his best advertisement. He was a man of refined and pleasant manners, and he must have had extraordinary tact, for many of his subjects—notably President Lincoln—submitted again and again to the ordeal of the studio. Washington Irving was displeased with his likeness and refused to sit for a second time, but General Grant remained imperturbable, even when showered with splinters of glass from a broken skylight.

Brady's talent for salesmanship is not disclosed in the pictures of his delicate, hypersensitive face, with its great mop of dark curls, pointed beard and moustachios, and weak eyes peering through the small lenses of metal-rimmed spectacles. His dapper, spry little figure suggests a French dancing-master of the period, though Brady was actually born of humble Irish parentage in Warren County, New York. He appears the sort of man who would have been ill at ease in the hearty scramble of nineteenth century America, shrinking from his crude compatriots and shunned by them. Salesmanship has surely known no greater triumph than that of Brady over a personal



From the book.

Group of Union soldiers with Brady's "whatizzit wagon"—"forerunner of the great newsreel trucks of modern warfare"—in the background.

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appearance that marked him as "artistic." One would like to have heard him as he arranged the pose and pointed his huge, frightening lens at Lincoln or Grant or Phineas T. Barnum, or jostled the drunken teamsters in the Union army's wagon trains.

Failure overtook Brady in the end. He was better at getting business than at organizing it. The sale of his "War Views" did not repay him for his large financial outlay, and Congress was both tardy and niggardly in recompensing him. The competition of younger men was too much for an old fellow with failing eyesight, and his last days were spent in poverty.

Mr. Meredith's fine collection of Brady's work, both portraits and war photographs, has done him justice. The author is himself a photographer, not a historian, and his recapitulation of the background of the Civil War adds some tedious pages to the volume. Most readers will prefer to dip occasionally into the text, and reserve their first attention for the pictures.

Eve's Numerous Daughters

WOMAN AS FORCE IN HISTORY. By Mary R. Beard. New York: The Macmillan Co. 1946. 369 *pp.* $3.50.

Reviewed by ELLA WINTER

WHY is Mrs. Beard so angry? For very early in this book you raise your hands and cry "O.K." Men have treated women shabbily throughout history. There have been very many very great women who have wielded enormous influence. They have been a force—as warriors and statesmen, as intellectuals, writers, queens, salon mistresses leading men into discussion of the ideas of their day; as naughty women, good women, heretics, ethical leaders, perverts, pioneers. Women have been a force in all historic periods. We certainly don't deny (or forget, as so many men seem so effectively to have done) the exploits of Boadicea, the many Catherines, Carrie Chapman Catt, Ninon de l'Enclos, Hypatia, Mildred McAfee, Zenobia, Frau Scholtz Klink. Mrs. Beard has summoned them all, with great research and immense effort, and has also expounded women's position under the law, in equity, in business, in bed, in administration, in art, at the stake, in mysticism. . . .

Yet why has she collected all this material? Why is she so cross? Mrs. Beard has a thesis. It reminds me of the young man who was arrested for a trivial offense and thrust in jail. He telephoned his attorney. "But they can't put you in prison for that!" the lawyer cried. "I know," his client wailed. "The only thing is, they have." She feels: "The dogma of women's complete historic subjection to man must be rated as one of the most fantastic myths ever created by the human mind." She repeats it again and again; "In the whole intellectual history of human beings, there is surely nothing more extraordinary . . . than this dogmatic summarizing of all women's history, from antiquity to recent times, under the head of 'subjection.' Generations accepted Blackstone's statement [that married women were "civilly dead"] as the whole truth . . . It became the basis of a great fiction."

TO prove her point, Mrs. Beard propounds a strange theory of history. She feels that, had it not been for Blackstone and his reactionary ideas, and the too-zealous feminists, women would never have swallowed the "fantastic myth" about their subjection. If Bebel's book on "Women and Socialism" had not sold fifty-seven editions in the German alone and "gone to the four corners of the globe," "working women would never have heard of their subjection."

Mrs. Beard feels a compulsion to prove that the reason for the subjection of women (which, remember, did not exist) could not be economic or social. Let us hope she is satisfied, for many others won't be, by her vulgarization, in the popular vein of today, of the theories of some historians and social writers. (Theories which are today influencing a quarter of the population of the globe, particularly the subjected.) Mrs. Beard's ripe tomato interprets these theories as regarding men and women "as victims of their stomach's mandates." One wonders how her historian's mind would deal with the other minorities of history, early Christians, Colonial subjects, Jews, Negroes, slaves. Or does she believe that Paul Robeson, Marian Anderson, and Crispus Attucks prove that Negroes in America are free, unsubjected, the equal of any man?

Mary R. Beard: "The dogma of women's complete historic subjection to man must be rated as one of the most fantastic myths ever created by the human mind."

Perhaps the oddest fact about this book is that many of the documents Mrs. Beard has read and frequently quoted prove just the opposite of her contention. The women who had power came pretty exclusively from one small and one highly privileged group.

> *In the royal and aristocratic families* [italics mine] women displayed great force. (P. 308) A large number of [medieval documents showing the achievements of women] refer principally to women of the upper classes . . . the line of subjection was clearly a class line, not a sex line. . . ." From evidence from social and economic life in the middle ages, class lines are sharply marked. But sex lines . . . were abundantly defied. (P. 245) And the historian Burkhardt, quoted by Mrs. Beard with approval, speaks of "the education of women of rank." The rest apparently don't count.

So we are convinced on one front: women have achieved many things; for one, they have borne all their oppressors. And their achievements have not been anything like sufficiently recognized, as when Henry Adams considered there had only been two good women letter-writers in history (and one was an Adams). They have been a force in history. But how does that in any way disprove that men still dole out, as what they think proper intellectual diet for women, soap operas and love pulps, permit unequal wages in industry, try to run the country with a womanless cabinet, and the re-education of 20,000,000 German children without a woman in AMG?

How does it manage to disprove that when, in one country of the world, economic brakes on the equality of women were removed, all women, all, even the lowest, knew they were on an equal footing, and men knew it too?

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A Theologian on Justice

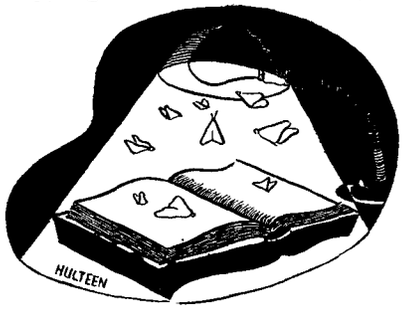
JUSTICE AND THE SOCIAL ORDER. By Emil Bruner. New York: Harper & Brothers. 1946. $3.

Reviewed by GEORGE N. SHUSTER

MR. JOHN FOSTER DULLES pleaded the other day for a "new-born spiritual intensity" in the light of which the "direction" in which humanity must go to find a worthy social goal might be revealed. The present book, by a scholarly Swiss theologian, has this intensity. It is also a conscientious exercise in dialectic. Though offered to the American public in a translation which, while adequate, does not convey the lucidity or the more than occasional luminousness of Dr. Brunner's prose, it almost succeeds in proving that the "theology of crisis" can become a modern "theology of decision."

I say "almost" because the author's profound, cautious pessimism does not permit him to predict a pleasant ending of the drama between human good and evil. He feels that the surviving "liberal" must face the "bitter truth" that masses "suffering most from injustice" may not prefer formal democracy to totalitarianism. And he says also that the Christian "liberal" cannot help realizing that if his church had preached justice in due time, a "proletariat would probably never have come into existence." Yet Brunner is not just another vague and windy exponent of the "social gospel." Justice is for him not a utopian shibboleth but a form of conduct, a state of moral being, rooted in the order of creation. It will not make the lion lie blissfully beside the lamb, nor is it man's highest aspiration. It is merely the sole condition for giving "to each one his own."

Love transcends justice because it gives to another what is one's own. And while it seems a distinctly Christian concept, justice also was hardly known in its fulness to the antique world. Perhaps only the Roman stoic had an insight into the real meaning of a claim to what is one's own. Justice is less a demand for the fulfillment of "rights" than it is a norm that establishes what Brunner terms the "fellowship of completion." Thus justice as the man seeks it in wedlock is complementary to what the woman legitimately desires. Together, by recognizing the family as the basic social unit, parents and children can determine justice. In economic life it is the equilibrium resulting from adequately defined community sharing of private property which alone can insure justice. For though there exists a general right to private property, that right is not vested in the single person alone, but rather in the person living inside the communities ordained by nature. More basically still, men are both equal and unequal, so that justice is necessarily the proper apportioning of equality. Finally, rights antedate the state, and



therefore the law of the state cannot be indifferent to them. Even so that law cannot be voided by saying that it is not to be found in the moral order, which is antecedent to the state. For such an order can be solely applicable to human life only when men are good enough to live by it. The state, Brunner repeats, exists because of our sins.

Enough has been said to show that for this Protestant theologian the Christian tradition of justice is opposed both to absolute individualism and to collectivism. That this tradition could not ward off the disease of rampant laissez faire is conceded. Will it now be able to oppose successfully the rising tide of collectivism? Brunner is anxious to give his church a doctrine of justice akin to the "impressive systematic theory" expounded by Catholic moralists. He seeks to exchange sentiment for reason. There are a number of points on which he diverges sharply from the Thomists and the Jesuits. His attitude towards divorce, for instance—which he admits as a "rare exception"—or his summary of the controversy over usury, sunder him from Catholic theologians. Nevertheless there is so much common ground that for the first time it is possible to see emerge what might become a Christian theory of the just society on which the differing confessions could for all practical purposes agree. Were they to do so, and were they then to preach their agreement fearlessly, they might well challenge any rival doctrine.

The matter is illustrated by Brunner's analysis of justice in the international order. As he himself says, his discussion is tentative, is based not on assumed complete knowledge of either the problems or their solution. Yet he feels that statements so far made by exponents of the Christian point of view have not come to grips sufficiently with the concrete situation. That situation is created, he thinks, by the need on the one hand for national freedom and on the other hand for international order and peace. Why not concede to the individual nation the same rights which are accorded to the person in a liberal society, while binding all together under generally applicable law? Were humanity to accept that as a point of departure, there would be more talk of coöperation and less of organization. "Will to power and egoism" are the root evils. A central world organization would not strike at them, unless it were radically opposed to both. But it cannot be opposed unless it is ready to grant the just measure of national freedom. This the reader will easily recognize as doctrine already implicit in the major Christian pronouncements.

No book has all the answers, and this one is written by a man far too earnest and modest to suppose that he possesses all of them. But it states a great thesis so clearly and effectively that it may well mark a new date in man's deliberation about the fate he holds in his own hands.

Perspective

By M. C.

JUST as the sculptor leaves the half-formed clay,
And stepping back a pace, eyes narrowed, peers
Upon his work, the breath, the strength, tears
Of all his life in that stern gaze: I weigh
Our love, and from deep solitude survey
My strange companion of the vanished years.
Her truth unfolds, and as the darkness clears,
She stands alone, revealed against the day.

Then as the sculptor, having drawn apart,
Returns, to find the clay take shape and grow
Beneath a hand half human, half divine:
I too return, and lifting up her heart,
Enshrine it here that all the world may know
A spirit that has walked through life with mine.

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Strictly Personal

IT'S THEIR HOME TOWN

TWO residents of Greenwich, Connecticut, most immediate suburb of the capital of the United Nations, have been sufficiently moved by the slap on UNO's wrist administered by their home town to want to try to explain what was behind it. So far as the editors of SRL know and believe, the project was not collusive. Mr. Larrabee's and Mr. Lewis's accounts arrived in the same mail. It is possible that they commute to New York City (where Mr. Larrabee functions as president of the Printers' Ink Publishing Company and Mr. Lewis as president of the Union Casualty Company) by the same train. They may even be bridge partners. But we doubt very much if either was ever aware that the other was describing the Greenwich mise-en-scène, and we believe that their surprise (and, we trust, delight) will be reciprocal at seeing each other's account in print.

THE EMBATTLED COUPON CLIPPERS OF ROUND HILL

UNLIKE New York and Massachusetts, the state of Connecticut has no state income tax. For those who get their living in New York City by wages or salaries that is no advantage, since New York State collects the tax anyhow on service income earned by work within its boundaries. But for those who get their incomes mainly from rent, interest, and dividends, the propertied class in other words, the tax advantage of living in Connecticut even when most of a person's interests are in New York City is considerable.

Greenwich is the nearest Connecticut town to New York City, so it is not surprising that it has a nest of wealthy folk who use Greenwich as their legal residence. They have splendid estates along the Merritt Parkway, especially in what is known as Round Hill, which is the so-called back country of Greenwich. To a somewhat lesser extent they are scattered in other sections of the town. They dominate the town through the Republican party (Greenwich voted against Roosevelt by two to one), and through control of charitable organizations and civic and social agencies.

The referendum just held in the town on whether or not to protest the UNO coming to Greenwich or even anywhere adjacent to it revealed a degree of neophobia and blatant isolationism that must be extremely disturbing to those who hope for world coöperation and who realize the power to warp public opinion that the financial masters of our country still wield.

In most places the size of Greenwich (population 37,000) there is an active chamber of commerce which is on its toes trying to bring new jobs and new sources of purchasing power to town. Usually the chamber of commerce and the real estate board want new homes, additional business, and more jobs in their locality. From the point of view of providing more jobs to build buildings for the UNO, to lay out new roads and streets, and to lay out and tend the grounds, the proposal to locate the UNO partly on land in the town of Greenwich was just what would have been desired. The same thing is true of the additional purchasing power that the UNO officials and secretariat would bring to the town.

But as soon as the proposal was made an anguished howl of objection went up from the back country squires. "Keep them out; don't let those foreigners come here." That was the burden of their argument. The fundamental basis of this backwoods mentality, so far as I could understand it, was fear of change. As one acquaintance of mine put it, "The UNO coming here is terrible. It will change the whole character of our community." The whole world is changing. Change is inevitable even in the back country of Greenwich. Yet the embattled coupon clippers of Round Hill thought they could and were certain that they should preserve Greenwich from all change. Naturally the people who don't want change are those who are entirely satisfied with things as they are, and that means chiefly those who are already so rich that any change seems likely to them to be down the ladder of wealth rather than up. Thus it was in Greenwich. Those with the mentality of "preserve us from all change" were mostly though not entirely very wealthy.

In trying to preserve their country estate from all change, the embattled coupon clippers were driven to make the most fantastically untrue statements. They said the UNO would pollute the streams and beaches of Greenwich with sewage. Naturally this was not true, as a telephone call to the engineer for the UNO Site Committee, whose office was located in New York, would easily have verified. But that did not stop the angry squires from saying it again and again, orally and in print, till most of the voters really believed it. They said the UNO would take the beaches of Greenwich. Why they should want to do that when they were going to pollute them with sewage they did not bother to explain to the intended victims of their propaganda. They spread among all the citizens the unfounded idea that the UNO would build a railroad through the heart of town. That the UNO would not have authority to do so since it is not a railroad company, and that a spur as short as that would not be built by a railroad company since such spur lines catering only to passenger traffic are universally unprofitable, was pointed out to the opponents. But they nonetheless spent large sums to frighten the people with the idea of a railroad clanging right past their homes.

An ad was published in the local paper telling the voters that their homes would have to be given away. Compensation by the usual process of eminent domain was never mentioned except as the proponents of the UNO tried finally to catch up with the misrepresentations of its opponents. A mere three thousand people live in the area to be taken and only a certain portion of those would be ousted, according to the plan of the UNO. Yet the opponents of the UNO asserted in a published ad that 75,000 people would be dispossessed. About one-eighth of the

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taxable property of Greenwich would be taken. Both our State Department and the UNO said that there would be at least some compensation made for the loss of tax revenue. But the opponents, in paid ads, asserted that taxes would be doubled by the coming of the UNO.

Such barefaced untruths by financially responsible people were, however, not the worst phase of the propaganda against the UNO. Some of the opponents in verbal propaganda and in a whirlwind telephone campaign made unblushing anti-foreign assertions about the necessity of keeping out the foreign riffraff. This art of propaganda found all too ready response. Letters to the Connecticut papers told the UNO to go back to the Aleutian Islands, where it would be cold enough to cool off their hot heads. Another letter told the UNO to go back to Geneva, where it had failed once before. The implication was plain that the writer was licking his chops over the prospect of another failure. We were told that the UNO only wanted to come here so that the officials could immerse themselves in the night life of New York. One irate citizen said that the UNO delegates and secretariat would bring foreign diseases to our shores. Another man said that all the foreign governments would send as their representatives arrogant officials who would order us around and treat us as dirt under their feet. He seemed to think that all Europe was still governed by the prototypes of pre-war Polish colonels. Another actually asserted that the UNO airplane field would be the starting point for airplane attacks upon our cities by atomic bombs. (These were all actual statements made from the floor at public meetings at which our speakers were defending the UNO.) The anti-foreign sentiment in the high school became so bad because of that propaganda that the principal, himself the son of foreign-born parents, became worried.

Throughout the nation women's organizations, such as the YWCA and the League of Women Voters, have done valuable work in combatting American isolationism. But in Greenwich the feminine counterparts of the Hearsts, Nyes, Pattersons, and McCormicks were sufficiently influential even in these organizations to prevent either of them from holding any public meetings at which the proponents of the UNO could present their case, although they were strongly urged to do so.

This whole situation must be of concern to all proponents of world peace. The financial masters of America, when they really take off the gloves in a political battle, at least condone and do not repudiate, even if they do not actively participate in, propaganda that is blatantly isolationist, that is founded on appeals to anti-foreign sentiment, and that can have no other effect but a bad one upon the cause of world peace. The sense of decency and responsibility toward world unity and peace which Franklin Roosevelt and Wendell Willkie, and now Eleanor Roosevelt and Harold Stassen, are trying to spread over the American people is a dangerously thin veneer, and one which some of our wealthy citizens will not hesitate to try to crack whenever it suits their convenience. Apparently they can crack it easily by the expenditure of sufficient money.

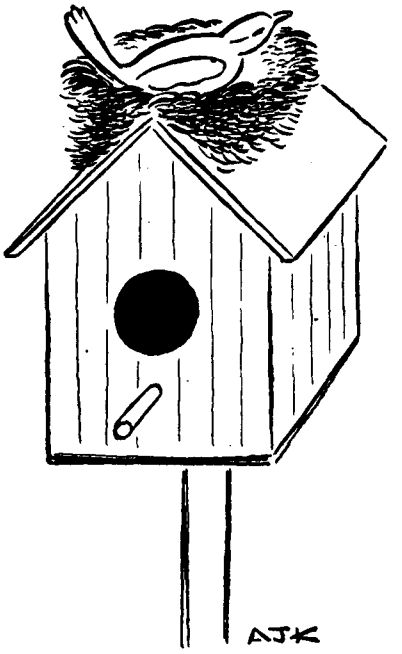
ALFRED BAKER LEWIS.

GREENWICH VOTES

I WAS one of the 7,524 voters who went to the polls on a drizzly Saturday recently to say whether or not we, of Greenwich, Connecticut, wanted the United Nations Organization to put part of their permanent headquarters within the limits of our town.

Of that total, 5,505 of us said we didn't, and 2,019 of us said we did.

I was in the minority group. Nat-



urally, I am disappointed and a little ashamed that the vote came out as it did, because, as a veteran of one war and a civilian participant in another, I am passionately concerned over international unity.

I have read a great deal of the newspaper comments on Greenwich and the UNO. As I think of it and as, against the perspective of some days after the election, I think over what went on in our town of Greenwich before the referendum, it seems to me that there are some significant points that have been overlooked.

The town of Greenwich is perhaps one of the last spots in the United States you would pick as being typical of the customs and thinking of Americans. It is a wealthy town, one of the wealthiest per capita in the country. I would guess that if completed high school courses and college degrees mean anything, it would rank near the top in the proportion of its citizens who can call themselves educated. Certainly the number of college degrees in the Round Hill section, where the UNO was most bitterly opposed, would be high.

Greenwich is not, then, a community of "Middlewestern isolationists." Its people probably are far more internationally-minded than those of most other communities in this country. I think that is an important fact.

Why, then, would a community of this kind vote so strongly against having the UNO in its midst?

In the first place, the community didn't vote strongly one way or the other. There were in Greenwich at the time of the referendum about 20,560 registered voters. Of these only 7,524, about one-third, cared enough to inconvenience themselves on a rainy Saturday to vote on this issue. At the time of the last presidential election, we had 20,899 registered voters. Of these, 17,585 voted.

Although the period of discussion over the UNO referendum was much shorter than the discussion period of the presidential election, every effort was made to get out the vote. Both sides spent a lot of money in the local papers and on handbills. There were a number of public meetings and the subject was debated as hotly among the local residents as the merits of two candidates during a presidential election. Both sides offered free transportation to the polls.

In spite of this, only a little more than a third of us voted, whereas more than three-quarters of us expressed our preference for Mr. Roosevelt or Mr. Dewey.

The only conclusion I can draw is that when faced with an international issue, about two-thirds of us either couldn't decide or, having decided, didn't think it was important enough for us to express our decision in a referendum.

A second important fact is that in the minds of most of the citizens this was a local issue. The opponents of the UNO in their advertising were careful to point out that as individ-

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uals they believed in the principles of that organization. I think most of them were sincere. They also believe in the local school system. But they have shown on previous occasions that they, as individuals, don't want a local school in their own back yard. In this they are hardly unique.

The most telling argument against getting the UNO in our town was that it would change us from a quiet, spacious residential community to something else—what we were not quite sure. In other words, we reduced a question of international importance to a guess concerning what would happen at our own front doors. I wonder if a great many of our internationally-minded organizations don't overlook this very simple but very important fact.

Sure, the opponents believed in the UNO. But it could function just as effectively some place else, or at least that's the way they argued, and therefore let's not disturb our own lives or change the character of our community.

The most bitter opposition to the coming of the UNO centered, of course, in those few square miles of the town where UNO quarters would be set up. The residents of this section faced squarely the problem of what they would do if they were moved out of their homes. And they didn't want to move out of their homes.

Like most other parts of the country, we are undergoing a real estate boom. Houses which five years ago went begging on the market at $7,-500 are now being snapped up at $18,000 or $20,000. I imagine that every resident of the Round Hill section not only worried about having his house taken down, but also wondered where he was going to move.

Small potatoes? Yes, but, after all, how would its editors like to be faced with finding a new office for *The Saturday Review of Literature*?

I didn't vote with the residents of Round Hill. I think, as did Mrs. Luce and other prominent residents of that section who voted for a welcome to UNO, that a solution for population displacement could be found. But as profoundly as I believe in giving every encouragement possible to anything that offers solution to international difficulties, I can still understand the Round Hill point of view.

If I were a member of any organization promoting international unity, I think I would now be realistic enough to realize that the Round Hill point of view is not confined to Greenwich or even to the United States. I think you would find some of it in Staffordshire or Ile-et-Villaine or Sao Paulo.

I don't like it. I think it's wrong. But trying to be realistic about it convinces me again that for most of us international questions eventually boil down in our minds to what is going to happen on our street or in our town.

Another thing that should interest the man or woman who wants to promote international amity is a secret that long ago was discovered on an international scale by Mr. Hitler, and has been known for several hundreds of years on a local scale by every good politician. It is that logic and soundness often have nothing to do with winning arguments. Although at the bottom of our thinking was a worry about how our community would change (perhaps it went even deeper than that to a worry about change itself), many of us were swayed by ridiculous arguments.

One woman said she didn't want UNO in our community because she was having a hard enough time now getting her children to do their homework. She shuddered to think of what would happen if UNO settled among us.

We heard a lot about the undesirability of bringing foreigners into our community. The people who used this argument most vociferously and, I might say, effectively had no qualms some years ago about bringing foreigners in to do their gardening or take care of their roads. Also, they overlooked the fact that many of the foreigners who would attend UNO sessions would consider most of the residents of our little community their social inferiors.

We were told that the UNO would mean a mass immigration into our community of Jews. Nobody explained just why the UNO would bring in Jews any more than it would bring in Chinese or Czechoslovakians.

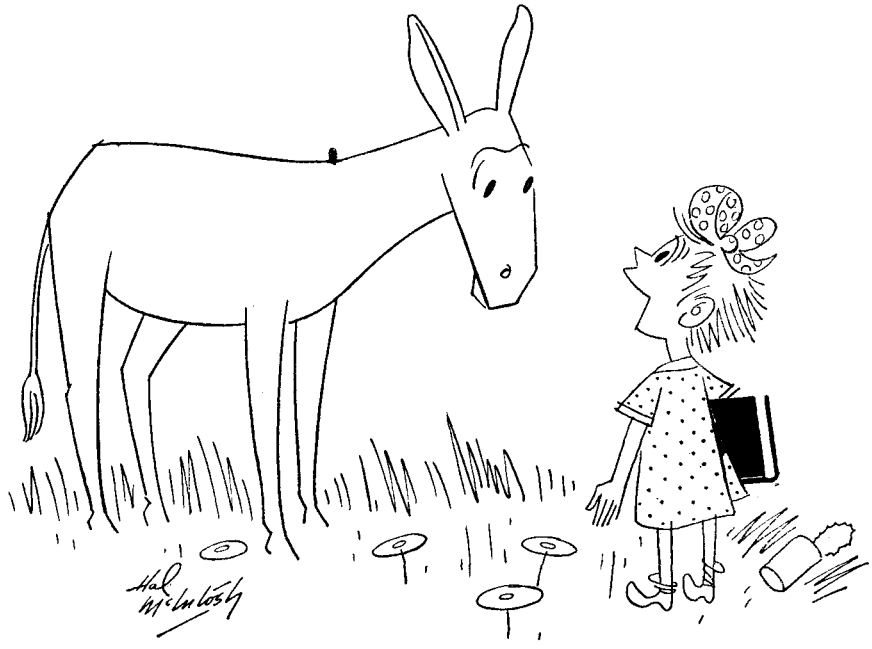
One irate opponent of the UNO told me that Sound Beach Avenue would be crowded with hot-dog stands. Sound Beach Avenue is about five miles from the UNO site and although I have always thought that hot-dogs are a peculiarly American phenomenon, this gentleman apparently envisioned a kind of Coney Island.

We were told that the foreigners would use our beaches. This, in the face of the fact that a census taken at any of our beaches on a busy Sunday afternoon would show a rather high percentage of foreign names attached to people who are already living in Greenwich.

A butcher told me that if the UNO moved in the people of the back country wouldn't buy meat from us any more. I asked him how many customers from the back country he had, and he admitted he had none.

None of these arguments got into print. They didn't appear in the dozens of letters in the local newspaper, or in any of the newspaper advertisements or handbills. But they were the little specious but plausible arguments that were passed from mouth-to-mouth and that had a tremendous influence in swinging the vote. Hitler, Stalin, one of Mayor Kelly's ward heelers, or even I could tell the people who are promoting international unity not to overlook that kind of argument.

The most disturbing result of the debate has been the strong injection of the anti-foreign prejudice in our community. I know several foreign-born people who are proud of their



"Are you by any chance a fairy prince in disguise?"

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citizenship in the United States. They have been patriotic citizens during the war and have done more than their share in carrying the load of wartime community activities. I have talked to some of them and I find that their pride in American citizenship today has a sour taste.

They are afraid. And so am I! To me it is ominously frightening that so many good people (and I mean good people, good average citizens, the kind you like to have as friends) should not only accept this anti-foreign argument without protest but should, in some cases, fall in with it.

These are not followers of Gerald Smith or Father Coughlin. Put a starving German baby or a starving Negro boy in their back yard and they would be the first to feed him and care for him. But they have drunk deep of the draughts of Nazi poison and don't know it.

I say it frightens me. I think it should frighten all of us.

If there is any phase of the referendum that is pleasing to me, it is that it demonstrated once again how deeply rooted in the soil of New England, even in the panhandle of Connecticut, is the old-fashioned town-meeting idea of democracy. Even though we may live in a snooty suburb of New York, some of the good old New England democracy is so much a part of the soil and the air that we breathe it in whether we were born in San Francisco or Tidioute.

Here was an important issue to the community. The first impulse of the leaders on both sides of the debate was to hold a referendum.

Next month we may be signing petitions against a through highway, and the month after that we may be holding meetings to get the New Haven to put flower boxes around the Riverside Station. But at least we still believe in the right to petition and we still think that if there is something we want done or not done, we should vote on it.

Therefore, although I don't like the way the vote came out, although I am a little ashamed of it, although I am frightened at some of the things that happened while we were deciding to vote, I know that I am licked.

We voted. I am in the minority. But we all had a chance to say what we wanted to say, as loudly as we wanted to say it. Even though licked, we can still go on fighting in the hope that community opinion may change. There's always a chance for another vote.

That, at least, is a lot—in these days a precious lot!

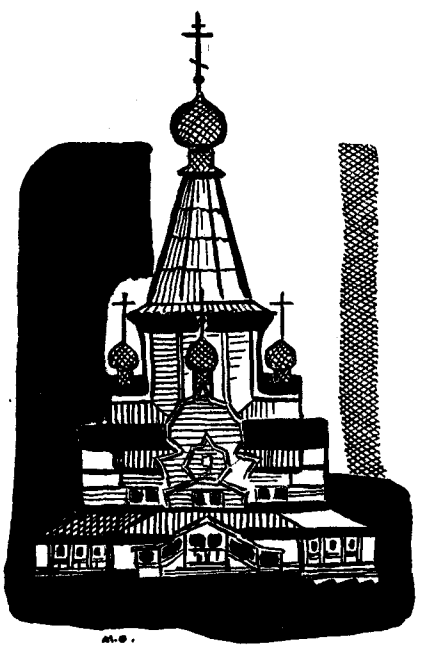
C. B. LARRABEE.

Affirmation of a Faith

THE SON OF THE LOST SON. By Soma Morgenstern. Translated by Joseph Leftwich and Peter Gross. New York: Rinehart & Co., Inc. 1946. 269 pp. $2.50.

Reviewed by NATHAN L. ROTHMAN

IT has been said many times that the major themes of imaginative literature are love and war; the big novels of our time have, most of them, confirmed this. Yet we need only to look a little farther back, into the histories, diaries, biographies, sermons, and letters, to remember, if we have forgotten, at least one other driving force almost as imme-



diate as these two, almost as violent, and not a whit the less consuming. This is the religious compulsion, toward or away from God (an inversion of the theme, not a negation of it), which has played a very minor role in the contemporary novel, although it looms as large as ever in men's minds.

It is, indeed, a salutary thing to see a novel with this great philosophic reality squarely at its core. Mr. Morgenstern's book—the first, apparently, of a series—is not about the struggle of man against man, or for woman. Its rigors are those of the spirit, in flight away from God, in malaise among the empty spaces of freedom, in search again for the comforts and confinements of surrender to God. This is the drama, stated intellectually in cold logical terms, stated emotionally in terms of personalities throbbing with the passions of religion that are as devastating and as exalting as the passions of love.

I have said that this is apparently the first of a series of novels, because the actual physical data of time and circumstance that are presented here seem merely to be a preamble to a longer history to come. We are introduced to the central characters, we are given a broad understanding of past events that have shaped present facts and relationships, and we view one or two crucial moments as the present begins to move in perceptible directions.

This is the story of Wolf Mohilevski, a Jewish landowner in Poland, is going to Vienna in 1928, to attend a Jewish Orthodox Congress. Another reason for his trip is to find a lost nephew, son of a brother whose name has been unmentioned in his home town since the day he embraced another faith and accepted baptism. If the novel were to be condensed to its plot ingredients, they would appear as follows: Mohilevski attends the Congress; Alfred, his nephew, attends also, as guest of his guardian, a Jewish councillor in Vienna; uncle and nephew meet and know one another; Alfred decides to return to Poland and see if he cannot enter the Jewish community there and discover for himself the life his father had renounced; together they depart for home. The time elapsed is but a few days. We seem barely to have met these people, and they seem barely to have begun their movements, before the book is ended.

It is clear that the greater part of their history is still submerged, to be revealed in future books. But there is enough here. For the lack of actual narrative length and breadth, there is the intense density of thought and feeling to compensate. The fearful piety of Wolf Mohilevski, the varied states of revelation to be found at the Congress he attends among the representatives of European Jewry, the searching, yearning, serenely religious hunger of Alfred (this is a very complex and difficult portrait, beautifully done), are traced separately and jointly like themes in a sonorous fugue. This is a good figure to pursue just a little further. Each of these portraits is a statement of one aspect of the varied people who are known as Jews. Together, intertwined, interplaying, they make a whole, resonant, fugued, positive statement of Semitism—what it is, not what it is not. Not, that is, another outcry against anti-Semitism; but a yea-saying, a definitive declaration: this we are. I shall await the books to come, if they are to come, with great interest.

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BLOOD, SWEAT, TEARS, AND IRON CURTAINS

MR. CHURCHILL'S addresses invariably find their rightful place in published volumes, there to be reviewed as significant and historic commentary. But the Fulton, Missouri, and the New York City speeches* have about them a driving urgency that does not permit even a literary journal to defer its review until the formalities of book publication are observed.

We pass over at once as of perhaps little consequence the curious circumstances surrounding the Fulton speech. With the best will in the world for Missouri in general and for Westminster College in particular, and with the fullest sympathy for Mr. Truman's loyalty to Missouri institutions, we are moved to wonder that the great influence that goes with the office of President of the United States should have been used to bring the former British Prime Minister to Fulton in what inevitably smacks of virulent chamber-of-commercism. Not that Fulton is undeserving of its eminent visitors; it is just that the collateral exploitation of the Missouri locale and its institutions in connection with the speech seemed excessively deft, or, rather, deftly excessive.

But what is important, of course, is not the locale but the speech itself. What Mr. Churchill had to say at Fulton may not go down in history alongside some of his memorable war addresses, but there can be no doubt that the entire world listened to him, just as there can be no doubt that his message legitimized and brought out into the open perhaps less brilliantly articulate but nonetheless emphatic efforts in certain quarters not only to welcome but to bring on a showdown with Soviet Russia now.

In the course of his Missouri address, which he aptly titled "The Sinews of Peace," Mr. Churchill made four principal points. It is risky and perhaps unfair to attempt to summarize the arguments of someone with whom you disagree, particularly when the tone, the qualifications, and the careful development of his material cannot possibly be reflected in short-order form. But we hope we do Mr. Churchill no injustice in stating that the essence of his position, as first stated at Fulton and later amplified in New York, is as follows:

(1) The United Nations Organization must some day become a "temple of peace," but it is no such temple now. That being the case, nations must still look to the "solid assurances of national armaments for self-preservation." At the same time, however, everything must be done to build up UNO. As a step in that direction, it is suggested that a beginning be made by creating an international air force consisting of nationally trained and nationally uniformed air squadrons.

(2) But it would be "imprudent" to go so far as to turn over atomic weapons to the international police force. "God has willed" that atomic energy for military purposes be discovered by the Western democracies. Such a blessing is not to be lightly held. But should non-democratic nations develop their own atomic weapons, then the democracies will have the advantage of a "formidable superiority."

(3) The only way to promote a genuine world organization, and the only way to prevent war, is through a "special relationship between the British Commonwealth and Empire and the United States." This would involve joint military preparation and joint military action, as well as eventual common citizenship.

(4) The principal threat to the peace of the world today is Soviet Russia, which has drawn an "iron curtain" across the European continent. Though Soviet Russia does not seek war, she seeks the "fruits of war and the indefinite expansion of her power and doctrines." The only way to settle this threat is through strength, which the Soviet only respects, while the Soviet has only contempt for weakness, "especially military weakness."

In considering these points—and in disagreeing sharply with most of them—we also deplore the many ill-considered attempts to answer Mr. Churchill by vilification and abuse.

Let us state forthwith that we do not believe that Mr. Churchill is a "vicious reactionary" or "devout Fascist" or a "Nazi-at-heart"—to quote from some of the less inspired labels that have been flying his way. We believe Mr. Churchill to belong to the truly great not only of his own time but of history. We believe he built a bridge that had to be built at a time when failure to build one would have cut off the British people and a number of other peoples, including the American, from eventual victory. What he said to keep that hope alive can never be unsaid, nor should it ever be forgotten.

But it is democracy's strength that each great debate can begin afresh. Victors of previous debates keep being challenged by new facts and events and circumstances. Logic and wisdom require re-proof rather than reputation. There is nothing self-starting or self-sealing about reason; its generative or protective power grows out of specific situations with specific facts to feed on. Little won-

* *THE SINEWS OF PEACE. An Address by Winston S. Churchill. Westminster College, Fulton, Missouri. Introduction by Harry S. Truman, March 5, 1946.*
BY WAY OF CLARIFICATION. An Address by Winston S. Churchill. Waldorf-Astoria Hotel, New York, N. Y. Extended Introduction by Thomas E. Dewey, March 15, 1946.

Interview With An Authority

By Lt. A. L. Glaze

APIED old codger tossed his drooling chin
Cool crazily, crossing and uncrossing his eyes.
"Youngster," he wailed, sucking his whiskers in,
"Because of those strange disturbances in the skies
There where the aircraft fizz, or below where the groves
Are blooming with corpuscles red or white, and flesh,
And ideals gallop at burning the pitiful loaves
And spoiling the fishes, I have dreamt afresh;
I discovered the nature of him we see as God.
He fingers his lip pointlessly back in a cave,
Fed by buzzards prophetlike—" A pain
Crossed the old man's wrinkles. He wove a nod
To some phantasm passing that it was brave
To greet. He grinned confidingly. "God is Insane."

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der there is so little standardization to greatness.

On this point, we know of no better discussion of the fallibility of greatness than is to be found in Mr. Churchill's six-volume biography of his illustrious ancestor, John Churchill, Duke of Marlborough. The author's job, as he himself explained it, was to "show Marlborough in his wonderful strength, without concealing his faults." As to his strength, many authorities believe him to be the greatest military genius in Britain's history. He directed what was perhaps England's first world war; there were times when only the force of his personality and his imagination kept the Empire going. As to his faults, a fair number may be mentioned in addition to the personal ones which largely caused his countrymen to reject him while he was at the height of his glory, if not of his power. But his biggest fault of all, from Britain's standpoint, was his inability to understand peace-making as well as he did war-making. He led the Grand Alliance to a victory over Louis XIV, but, unsatisfied with liberating Europe, he became obsessed with the desire to destroy France. This obsession, as Mr. Churchill points out, was as short-sighted as it was dangerous. The Whigs, to which party Marlborough belonged, succeeded only in losing "the victorious peace which might have closed the struggle. In France, they roused the patriotism with which Frenchmen have always defended their soil, and in England they fell a prey to the designs of their party foes."

Significantly, Mr. Churchill reminds us in his book that Britain's proper role at that time should have been that of a prime mover for a common security. It was lamentable, he declares, that England should have deserted her leadership of the international organization for a foolish unilateralism.

Our purpose in citing Marlborough is not to draw historical parallels but to invoke Mr. Churchill's sanction for a frank and direct review of his position in facing the structural problems of a new peace, however towering his greatness as a war leader.

Mr. Churchill states a harsh but necessary truth when he points out that UNO as presently constituted is incapable of keeping the peace. There is a real danger that the UNO may have been oversold; too many Americans entertain the belief that it has the force of law and that it possesses police powers. Enthusiastic articles and beautifully filmed shorts and animated movies turned out by Hollywood, showing how easily and effectively aggressors would be dealt with, have helped to distract public attention from this essential reality: The UNO has not yet passed the drawing-board stage, despite the long sessions already held. Moreover, instead of accretions of power, instead of a steady implementation in its scope and machinery, it is actually weaker today than it was immediately after San Francisco. Not that it hasn't been given big jobs to do. No organization so weak has ever had thrust upon it problems so vast. But while the nations were generous in turning over their problems, they were niggardly in turning over the necessary authority.

—From the painting by Kneller. Courtesy Bland Gallery.

John Churchill, Duke of Marlborough "unsatisfied with liberating Europe . . . became obsessed with the desire to destroy France. This obsession, as Mr. [Winston] Churchill points out, was short-sighted, dangerous."

But in agreeing with Mr. Churchill that everything must be done to build up the UNO, we fail to find in his talks any suggestion as to how this is to be done. To be sure, there is brief mention of aviation squadrons which, significantly, would be nationally uniformed and which would not be required to act against their own countries. But this protection is that of a cardboard house in a hurricane, as Mr. Churchill himself indicates. And what is most disturbing is that his suggestions, far from moving in the direction of a stronger and adequate world organization, are actually moving away from it. It is not enough to say that UNO must some day be strong; that "some day" is here and now, and no time can be lost in equipping it with whatever authority is needed to give it the power of world law.

It is this counter direction, this retrogression, this reliance upon devices which have never before succeeded, that characterizes the general nature and one of the talks. Mr. Churchill is against turning over atomic energy to the UNO because UNO is in its "infancy." UNO is not an organism with a definite life cycle prescribing a fixed number of years for infancy and youth and old age. Time by itself will not cause UNO to grow and become strong. Only the nations can give it that growth, and they might as well do it at a time when it alone can save the peace. For the desperate necessity today is to give UNO authority adequate to the problems of atomic energy or any other world problems which are too big for any single state to handle.

What, for example, if other nations should develop their own atomic bombs? When Mr. Churchill attempts to reassure us by talking about a larger stockpile of our own, he ignores a fundamental fact being advanced by the atomic scientists. Unlike planes or guns, where superiority in numbers is important, any advantage in atomic bombs may be wiped out in a surprise attack. And the next war may be over a few days or even a few hours after it begins, with the distinct possibility that the attacked nation might not even know against whom to retaliate, assuming it still had the power to do so.

Nevertheless, Mr. Churchill sees security in an atomic armaments race. As a not-unimportant or unrelated question, just what would such a race mean to the American people? The scientists tell us that it would mean much more than the mere manufacture of atomic weapons. It would necessarily involve the dispersal of our cities of 100,000 population and over. It would mean such controls over this nation as it has never before known.

But for his main reliance on security, Mr. Churchill calls for fusion between the English-speaking peoples. This plan, though sketchy, embodies the essential features of the "Union Now" proposals advanced by Mr. Clarence Streit, although Mr. Churchill is more blunt in stating that the purpose of the union is for protection against Russia.

It is a fair question whether Mr. Churchill may be provoking or at least intensifying the very situation we all wish to avoid. By choosing our own side, we almost automatically create the other side. Our action might easily provoke the natural reaction of comparable fusion of all the non-English speaking peoples, especially in Europe and Asia. Even worse than that: it would set the stage and point up the issues for World War III.

Mr. Churchill's answer to this

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would probably be that the chance is worth taking since the Soviet has respect only for strength. This sounds logical enough, but you begin to wonder whether Mr. Churchill may not have been confusing strength with hostility. It is one thing to be firm; another to be bellicose. At any rate, we had a good chance last week to see Mr. Churchill's theory in operation. The Fulton speech was nothing if not strong. If the theory worked, the reaction to it in Moscow should have been soberly respectful. But Mr. Stalin, apparently, didn't fall in with the theory. He said flatly that Mr. Churchill was calling for war and that Russia would not welcome such a war but would not be unprepared. Nor did the strong noises in this country in favor of Mr. Churchill's talks, with demands for an immediate showdown, cause the Soviet to withdraw her troops from Iran.

Can there be any doubt that what is needed today is not hot needles but cold compressors? Not side-choosing but genuine statesmanship? Not armament races or blocs of power but the creation of a higher authority? Finally, not drifting but leadership and initiative?

There is nothing abnormal in the crisis confronting us; any more than there would be anything abnormal about a crime wave if all courts and police forces were abolished. And it would be foolish to expect the present crisis to settle itself and the threat of war to dry up and blow away so long as peoples fail to create law or even move toward world law.

This brings us to what we believe is actually the underlying weakness of Mr. Churchill's talks. There is the implied notion that the peace of the world could be assured if only a way could be found of handling or disposing of the Russian problem. The definite impression is given that one nation and one nation alone holds the key to enduring peace. Without belittling the size of the crisis between the Soviet and the Anglo-American peoples today, and without condoning aggression, threats, or iron curtains, we find it hard to believe that any one nation, by behaving properly, can create a lasting peace.

Let us assume, for purposes of argument, that the earth opened up tomorrow and swallowed Soviet Russia, and that world Communism as a threat was swallowed up at the same time. Would the threat of war or the causes of war disappear as well? If so, how are we to explain the fact that Europe has been chewed up by war almost continuously since there was a Europe to fight over—for centuries before anyone ever heard of Lenin or Stalin? How are we to account for the innumerable wars between England and France at such cost to both? How are we to account for World War I—or even World War II for that matter? And how can we be certain that the same causes might not result in a Russia-less World War III?

No; Russian unilateralism today is not *the* disease; it is a product of the disease. Not *the* problem, but *part* of the problem. That problem is the centuries-old problem of competitive national sovereignties, as Mr. Emery Reves demonstrates so cogently in "The Anatomy of Peace." That problem involves the race for security, each nation deciding for itself what is necessary for its own security, with the result that two or more nations would mark out the same areas as its exclusive security zones. That problem involves the setting up of military bases and the conversion of small nations into buffer states, with spheres of influence extending everywhere. That problem involves jockeying for position and power, with military alliances and blocs of states arrayed against each other. That problem involves reliance upon national military establishments, leading inevitably to an armaments race, and, equally inevitably, to the use of those armaments.

Perhaps this is oversimplifying the problem and giving it too much of a pat approach. But if the big job before us is the building of a peace that will free the world for the first time of war, which is to say a permanent peace, since nothing less may be able to keep the human race alive, then it becomes necessary to define the problem for what it is.

In sum, what Mr. Churchill has to suggest may be too much union or not enough. It is too much in the sense that it will create competing union blocs; not enough in the sense that it stands in the way of the larger union inseparable from effective world law.

Either world problems will be settled through *real* world organization, meaning world law, or they will be settled by world war. World law is not the end but the means. It is no distant goal but a present indispensable. It is not a hope but the *only* hope, the only chance. To whatever extent we delay, to whatever extent we move in other directions, by that much do we plan for chaos.

N. C.

The Golden Armor

By Louis Kent

SAID the man in the golden armor,
"Depend on me,
I will slaughter their cruel generals
And make their armies reel.
Their iron necks shall know my foot,
I will level their plumes in dust and blood
And lay them helmet to heel."

The man in the golden armor said,
Speaking to me,
"They have snatched the mothers and daughters up
In their terrible train.
You, with mother and sister and wife,
Does it chill your veins? How do you feel?
Will you give your life?"

The man's armor was gold when he said
To us, to all of us,
"Would you not lie with the rich dead,
In the ultimate dark victorious,
Knowing you left the land free,
Knowing you swept the skies clear,
And all things stand as before they stood?
Then follow me!"

Said the old in the gilded armor,
Said the man, and his armor was not quite gold,
As he marched to meet the iron waves,
As he marched down to the storming sea,
As he marched down to clear the sand,
As he marched down in his rusty greaves,
Followed by you and me.

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

ERRATUM: *The editors of the* SRL, *and not Mr. Roger Butterfield, were responsible for the erroneous characterization of Louise Dickinson Rich, author of "We Took to the Woods," as "the late" in Mr. Butterfield's article, "What Pocket Magazines Feed On" (issue of March 9, page 5). As Mark Twain . . .*

Northern Gentleman Protests

SIR: May I beg sufficient space in your columns to correct two or three of the misstatements of fact in Margaret Leech's review of my "The Beleaguered City" as printed in your issue of February 9?

I am not the Southern gentleman she takes me for. Indeed, it is clearly and correctly stated on the jacket of the book that I was born in Rochester, N. Y., and educated in the Middle West and at Yale, that one of my uncles died of tuberculosis which he contracted while guarding Confederate prisoners at Elmira, and that a great uncle of mine collected five Confederate bullets in his body while fighting on the Northern side at Gettysburg. I have always lived in the North: in Minnesota for my first forty-five years, and since then in Massachusetts and New Jersey.

It would seem to have been Margaret Leech's misapprehension on this point that caused her to deplore the author's failure "to reconcile the traditions of his section with the feelings and beliefs of the modern world." Presumably it was this misapprehension that caused her so to mistake the purpose of the book—though it is clearly stated in the preface and obvious throughout the text—namely, to tell what happened to Richmond people during those fateful years and how men, events, and conditions appeared to them at that time.

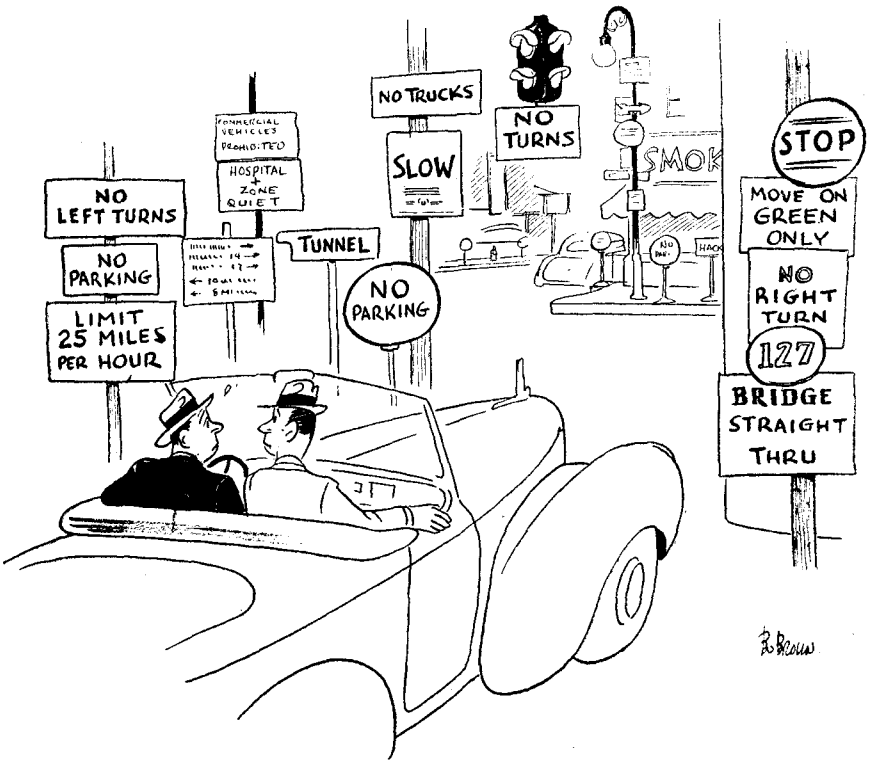
Nevertheless it does seem strange that an intelligent and serious reviewer could have overlooked — to select but two examples of matters that appear to have escaped her attention—the many long passages in praise of the rank and file of the Confederate army which are based not only on Southern authorities but on the writings of foreign military observers as well; or how she could have failed to notice that the gay doings of the planter aristocracy are balanced by numerous and detailed accounts of the hardships, the privations, and the devotion of the poor and the once modestly well-to-do.

ALFRED HOYT BILL.

Princeton, N. J.

Lysenko, Pro and Con

SIR: The article "Science, Totalitarian Model" by Robert Simpson in your issue of March 9 creates a number of false impressions which ought to be corrected. Chief of these is that the book by the Soviet agronomist, Lysenko, of which Mr. Simpson's article purports to be a review, contains official Soviet doctrine on genetics. This has been denied by the official representative of Soviet science at the



San Francisco conference of 1945, Dr. Anton R. Zhebrak, in an article published in *Science*, October 5, 1945 (vol. 102, p. 357). Dr. Zehebrak, himself an agronomist and plant breeder, writes in that article:

> As an agronomist, Academician Lysenko has put forward a number of practical suggestions which have been of great value to the Soviet Government. Many Soviet geneticists are, however, sharply critical of his theories about genetics, and in no way support his attempt to re-examine and discard a number of the fundamental postulates of our science.
>
> The Soviet Government has never interfered in the discussions of genetic questions which have now been raging for some ten years. Academician Lysenko was rewarded for his work in the field of practical scientific farming and not for his views or experiments on genetics. Furthermore a number of our geneticists and plant breeders —some of whom have developed new varieties of the chief grain crops (Konstantinov, Lisitsin, Shekhurdin, Yuriev, the present writer, and several others) and who have sharply criticized Academician Lysenko's views on genetics and selection—have also been decorated by the Soviet Government.
>
> These facts should serve to show that Academician Lysenko's criticism of genetics, based as it is on naive and purely speculative conclusions, despite the vigor of its assault, is incapable of impeding the onward march of genetics in the U.S.S.R.
>
> The fact that Academician Lysenko is director of the Institute of Genetics of the Academy of Sciences does not mean that other schools of Soviet geneticists are in any way hampered in their work.

Mr. Simpson's second claim is that Lysenko is typical of science in the Soviet Union. This is also unfounded, for no parallel to Lysenko's views on genetics exists in physics, chemistry, mathematics, astronomy, or other basic sciences in the Soviet Union. These sciences have been marked by very vigorous activity and great accomplishments, and there is no evidence in them of the type of mystical generalization which is found in Lysenko's book.

Dr. Irving Langmuir of the General Electric Company, famous American chemist and Nobel prize winner, said on his return from the Soviet Union in August, 1945: "The work done in the eighty-seven institutes of the Academy of Sciences of the U.S.S.R. is mainly of fundamental type. There is every indication that it is based on a very long-range view of the importance of science in a nation which expects a continuous improvement in the standard of living over a long period of years. At the meetings at various institutes, American scientists were told freely of the work done in the fields of pure science where the Russians have already made contributions of major importance. Nothing was asked in return, except our friendship and good will." (*Science Bulletin*, Vol. 1, No. 5, October, 1945.)

Fifteen other American scientists who visited the U.S.S.R. with Dr. Langmuir agreed with his estimate of the importance of Soviet contributions to science.

If Lysenko's views are neither official nor typical, then the bottom drops out of Mr. Simpson's article and it stands revealed as a biassed

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and unjustified indictment of Soviet science as a whole. One of the indictments concerns the attempted "nationalization" of science in the Soviet Union. I suppose this means it is to serve national ends, and its results are to be jealously held within the Soviet Union. Mr. Simpson ought to know that the results of Soviet science and technology are published in a large number of periodicals (in 1939 about three hundred) and books which are regularly sent abroad. Most of the journal articles are accompanied by summaries in English or French. A number of important journals are printed in the Soviet Union *in English* and a few in French, and thus become immediately a part of the international scientific literature. The fact that the results of current Soviet research in physics are published in Moscow *in English (Acta Physico-Chimica)* and sent to British and American libraries certainly does not suggest either secretiveness or a nationalistic purpose. Soviet policy in this regard is made very clear by the existence of an organization (VOKS, the Society for Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries) which sends abroad the great output of Soviet scientific literature. This is the type of active internationalism by which science lives.

One should no more view the whole of Russian science through the lens of Lysenko than one should view American science through fundamentalist writings on evolution. Lysenko's attack on genetics has not stopped the stream of significant advances in that science in the Soviet Union, which is second only to the United States in amount and quality of scientific work in genetics.

I would not have my strictures on Mr. Simpson interpreted as a defense of Lysenko's views, as expressed in this book. They seem to me unproved and unsound. But surely this need not lead me, or any unbiassed reader of this book, to indict the whole society from which it comes. I am afraid this is just what Mr. Simpson intended to do, and that he has used Lysenko's book as his excuse.

L. C. DUNN,
Professor of Zoology,
Columbia University.
Chairman, American-Soviet
Science Society.

New York, N. Y.

SIR: Dr. Dunn has misconstrued my exposure of scientific fraud into an attack on the whole of Russian science. He naively offers to refute me through an official spokesman who already has been discredited as a witness. Let Zhebrak answer first the reply made by Dr. Karl Sax of Harvard to the very letter in *Science* that Dr. Dunn quotes. Dr. Sax asked: "What has happened to Karpechenko, the geneticist who laid the foundation for work on all allopolyploid hybrids which Zhebrak has developed so successfully? Where is Vavilov, one of the world's greatest geneticists?" In *Science* of March 1 Vladimir C. Asmous of the Arnold Arboretum, Harvard, supports Sax from "personal experience." He says science must conform to political philosophy in the U.S.S.R. "We now have reliable information that Vavilov died in a concentration camp in Siberia in 1942," he writes. "The disturbing fact is that Vavilov is by no means an exception. We know that hundreds of lesser-known Russian scientists are dying slowly in Soviet concentration camps which can compete quite favorably with Belsen."

Who is telling the truth, Dr. Dunn and Dr. Zhebrak or Dr. Asmous?

Does Dr. Dunn really accept the statement of his own authority, Dr. Zhebrak, that Lysenko as an agronomist has done work of great value? My article said that if Vavilov spoke the truth Lysenko has damaged Russian agriculture. Dr. Dunn has maneuvered himself into the position of refuting Vavilov with an official scientist.

The statement that the Soviet has never interfered with discussion of genetics is false. It interfered with two great international discussions and it disseminated the views of Lysenko more widely than those of sound men.

As to the men Zhebrak lists as recipients of grain-breeding honors, there may be some significance in this which I won't discuss now. Lisitsin is singularly like N. Tsitsin in name. I am prepared to attack some of the claims made by popular writers for the plant-breeding achievements of N. Tsitsin.

I did not say Lysenko was typical of science in the Soviet, but I pointed out that he had great power over agricultural science, and with one exception every miraculous claim I alluded to was in agriculture. Lysenko has even boasted that he had thousands of followers. I drew no parallel in physics, chemistry, mathematics or astronomy, but I would like to see these fields investigated. For instance, does Dr. Dunn contend that no astronomers have been liquidated?

Does Dr. Dunn, who is chairman of the Science Committee of the National Council of American-Soviet Friendship, endorse the scientific standing of all the Russian academicians other than Lysenko? Many fine people belong to the American-Soviet Friendship group, but let me ask Dr. Dunn if he as a scientist endorses Release No. 32, Aug. 15, 1945, of the Agricultural Committee for Soviet Friendship, titled "Fertility of Livestock Increased by Hormone Method," purported to have been written by Academician Mikhail Zavadovsky?

Did Dr. Langmuir visit the eighty-seven institutions? Julian Huxley, who is certainly as great a champion of Soviet science as Dr. Langmuir, says rather significantly in *Nature*, Sept. 1, 1945: "I was unable to see anything of the work in agricultural genetics." He adds: "In some branches of Russian science a certain spirit of scientific nationalism is to be observed." My statement on nationalism was aimed at Russians who have attacked "foreign science" and at nationalistic American politicians who might gain control of atomic energy.

If Lysenko's views are neither official nor typical in any important degree, why did Dr. Dunn bother to criticize them in *Science* of February 8? Of course, his criticism of Lysenko "and his followers" is done so respectfully that no one could reproach him with bias. He compares Lysenko with American fundamentalists who deny the facts of evolution and concludes: "In both cases the causes of such attitudes seem to those outside the country to be obscure and puzzling. In both cases also the scientific position of the country is so strong that the heterodox views of small minority groups may safely be left to the judgment of time and progress."

If the United States nationalized genetics research and put it under a fundamentalist, would Dr. Dunn attack the government? *I* would.

His philosophical statement that time is on the side of the angels would make a controversy in itself. Recent history and the science of genetics offer contrary evidence. Dr. Dunn accuses me of bias. Since no man is a good judge of his own biases, I can only return the compliment and argue that my bias is better than his. I have been prejudiced in favor of the Russians all my life. I prefer their literature to any other and have always thought their scientists were unsurpassed. I have never had much faith in politicians and lately I may have become prejudiced (though I never thought of it as that) against Russian totalitarian politicians and apologists for them.

ROBERT SIMPSON.

New York, N. Y.

THROUGH HISTORY WITH J. WESLEY SMITH

"Wake up! You're supposed to march in the Whiskey Rebellion today."

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Prophet With Honor

THE FAITH OF A LIBERAL. By Morris R. Cohen. New York: Henry Holt & Company. 1946. 469 *pp.* $3.75.

Reviewed by GEORGE N. SHUSTER

PROFESSOR COHEN is a magnanimous liberal who in some important respects dissents from liberalism. He rightly observes that this last, as a movement, reposed on two faiths—"the belief in progress, and the belief in toleration." But he says at the very end of his book that no such thing as continuous historical advancement can be assumed, and one is therefore left to surmise that the liberal may after all be right because the "ups" may be more persistent than the "downs." In other words, progress may win in the end by a nose. But it may not. The ups, I take it, are the defeat of superstition by science, the growth of social consciousness, and Spinoza's definition of the Divine Mind. The downs, for their part, are too numerous to mention.

If all that leaves one wondering a little as to what the faith of a liberal really is in a time which has read, let us say, both Lenin and Ernst Juenger, there can be little doubt as to what Professor Cohen himself has been. The articles and reviews selected for inclusion in the present volume are as disparate as the coloring on Easter eggs. Some have to do with forgotten books, and others with scarce remembered episodes. But a mind that uses the scalpel with love shines behind all of them. Cohen is one of the most astute, fearless, and helpful critics this country has ever had. Less penetrating and perhaps less widely read than Spingarn, he possesses a quality not discernible in that great genius—a quality sometimes found in physicians born for the art of diagnostic. He can stand at a distance from a man or a book and see both the structure and the disease. And even more notably, he can sometimes offer a prescription that makes sense.

It is true that Cohen has no apparent contact with many men and situations—though the spectacle of a gentleman born into the unconscious habit of using great wealth seems to enkindle in him emotions not unlike those which seethed in Dickens. I cannot imagine that he ever read Dickens (though he quotes one of that master's more savage utterances) with profound sympathy. But let him deal with a mind he truly enjoys and the results are magnificent. No American has written more incisively about

Morris R. Cohen "is an intrepid custodian of the human reasoning process. He will not be . . . diverted from the philosopher's task of logical thinking."

Mr. Justice Holmes, Professor Dewey, or William James. He could have been a great lawyer or a first-rate historian. His comments on literature are less original and searching, but are never inconsequential. Few have read Goethe so well.

When you ask yourself what his method is, however, you are left wondering whether it is not a little like that of a man who can argue his wife out of every idea to which she may have subscribed, but who is nevertheless unable to make sense out of any woman. For example, Cohen is a very beguiling critic of the Communist position. He calmly takes this "science of history" apart, profiting in this instance by his insight into the weaknesses of Hegelian dialectic. But one does not find in the analysis the important fact that the Communists have created a political movement able to wield power. In short, it is all very well to say that Marxist economics rest on flimsy ground, and that Marxist dialectic is hardly as formidable as is sometimes assumed. The fact still remains that the Communist Party is a form of human society which can only be opposed by some other form of human society. And such a form can be created only by a doctrine, a philosophy, adequate for the purpose.

Conversely we read, in a short paper on Jesus, that the important thing about the Kingdom of Heaven is that it frees man of petty cares and vexations, thus creating opportunity to "enjoy the universal fruits of the spirit." One fancies that if the Kingdom of Heaven, as Christians envisaged it, had been nothing more than this, it would have been forgotten long before Nero bothered about it. Here, too, was a doctrine on the basis of which an attempt was made to erect a human order, which in this case was concerned, in theory at least, with both the individual and the collectivity. The effort to understand it surely involves more than attention to its major ascetic or esthetic drift, even as the attempt to come to grips with Marxism demands more than a concern with the flaws in its dialectic.

Even so Cohen has very much to say. He is an intrepid custodian of the human reasoning process. He will not be taken in, and he will not be diverted from the philosopher's task of logical thinking. Such men should be honored in the land. We are far from being able to muster even a company of them.

I Disagree

By Theodore Maynard

"Our long fool's errand to the grave"
—A. E. Housman (1859-1936)
"The great disaster of our birth"
—George Santayana (1863-)

I DISAGREE: the ephemeron's fragile wings
Sparkle their merry hour beneath a clear
Ephemeral sky, and find that life is dear,
As dear it is to all created things.
Though to imaginative man life brings
Love unrequited, lingering pain, and fear,
With the long Shadow ever drawing near,
Yet who more stubbornly to living clings?

Look up, thank God of al, old Chaucer wrote:
Prettily as you tune your pessimism,
Had you believed it you had cut your throat.
Even the damned preserve in the abysm
Existence as a good, and see it there
The solitary star in that despair.

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TRADE Winds

ROBERT WILDER'S "Written on the Wind" is based on a formula that never yet has missed fire: a sensational and explicit novel that unmistakably suggests a parallel case in real life. Dreiser used the device in "An American Tragedy," O'Hara in "Butterfield 8," Ward Greene in "Death in the Deep South." Wilder tells the story of the disastrous marriage of a neurotic scion of a tobocco dynasty and a sultry Broadway chanteuse; no newspaper reader can fail to remember an actual story with a similar cast that exploded all over the front pages of every newspaper a decade or so ago.

Wilder has handled his sensational material with great skill and gusto, and created scenes and secondary characters who make "Written on the Wind" by all odds the most exciting and enjoyable of the season's best-seller crop. There is Reese, a hardy, rather sullen son of a sharecropper who dominates the rich weakling Cary so completely that he even persuades him to go to Columbia. (My response as an alumnus of that institution was tempered by the fact that this is the only dull interlude in the book.) There is the familiar device of an old rip who is at one time irreverent, scandalous, lovable, and omnipotent. (Usually it is a guzzling grandma who uses four-letter words and solves everybody's problems with a salty reminiscence and a certified check. Here it is Uncle Joe, and familiarity as a type does nothing to dull the amusement he affords the reader.) There are the parents of Cary, decent, well-meaning people who literally don't know what to do with the millions they have inherited, and are quite the most appealing and memorable characters in the book. Finally, there is Cary's sister Ann-Charlotte, a little hellion who has done exactly as she pleased from the age of six.

Wilder describes Ann-Charlotte's amatory exploits in such intriguing detail that the comment of *The New Yorker's* reviewer deserves immediate filing in that periodical's Raised Eyebrow Department. "Ann-Charlotte," it reads, "is an interesting mutation of the Brett-Joan type in that she shares their enthusiasm about sex but makes sure that nothing happens to her by always backing away from it at the last moment. She comes to Reese as virginal as next week's snow."

What a home life those *New Yorker* boys must lead! . . .

MENTION OF John O'Hara's "Butterfield 8" calls to mind the Starr Faithful case, in which I inadvertently played a minor role. Miss Faithful was a beautiful young model whose body was washed ashore one morning on the sands of Long Beach. The murderer never was apprehended, but the case ruined a prominent New England politician who had become involved with the dead girl years before, and afforded the elite of Manhattan's journalistic fraternity an opportunity to interview at length Starr's ravishing younger sister, Tucker.

The day before Starr Faithful's disappearance, I had given a cocktail party at my office in honor of Miriam Hopkins, off to star in Hollywood for the first time. Since she invited all her friends, and I invited all mine, and since almost all of them brought companions unknown to either of us, nobody was quite sure who was there and who was not. To add to the confusion, an impetuous acquaintance from Havana insisted on bringing his twelve-piece rumba band, which played as loudly and continuously as possible. The low ceilings intensified the racket, and everybody poured down cocktails out of sheer self defense.

The evening ended inexplicably in the swimming pool of the Shelton Hotel, and then Jim Crowder and I went down to the Jersey shore for two days of golf and recuperation.

We heard about the discovery of Starr Faithful's body, but paid very little attention until Jim bought a newspaper at the Elberon station on the way home.

"Hello," he said, "get a load of this headline: 'Starr Faithful Last Seen at Publisher's Orgy.'" "Orgy, hey?" I answered. "I wonder who the publisher was." "You can stop wondering," said Jim. "It was you."

There were a dozen reporters waiting for me when I arrived home, not to mention my father, who said, "I told you the office was no place for shenanigans like that. You and your rumba bands! Serves you right." It appears that Starr Faithful had told her father before leaving her flat for the last time that she was bound for "a publisher's party in honor of Miriam Hopkins." To this day we have never found one soul who saw her there, although an artist friend remembered mentioning the party to her while she was modelling for him a few days earlier. Even if she had been there, it was apparent that it would have no bearing on the case. The reporters sensed that there was nothing here to hold them, and besides, most of them had met Tucker by this time. They drifted off to interview her again.

Then an assistant district attorney from Nassau County, very stern, very professional, arrived upon the scene. "I'm sure the girl never came here," he said, "but I think we'll have to subpoena every guest at the party." "That would inconvenience a lot of people," I pointed out. "It's a long ride to Garden City. And what could they tell you?" "Nothing," he conceded glumly, "but it would show the press we were leaving no stone unturned." "One of the stones would be Nelson Doubleday," I said thoughtfully. "He was here and so were a lot of his friends." The D.A. thought it over, then murmured, "Well, the hell with it." (Mr. Doubleday is one of the biggest taxpayers in Nassau County.)

The D.A. came to lunch with us, and told us some of the perplexing angles of the case. "When we found her," he said, "she had on a beautiful black dress, but nothing underneath it. Might be a clue." "Not at all," said my father with the authority of complete ignorance on the subject. "That's the way all young girls dress nowadays." The D.A. looked impressed, and made a note in his little black book.

That about ends the story, except that Miriam Hopkins phoned from California the next day. "I never heard of Starr Faithful before," she

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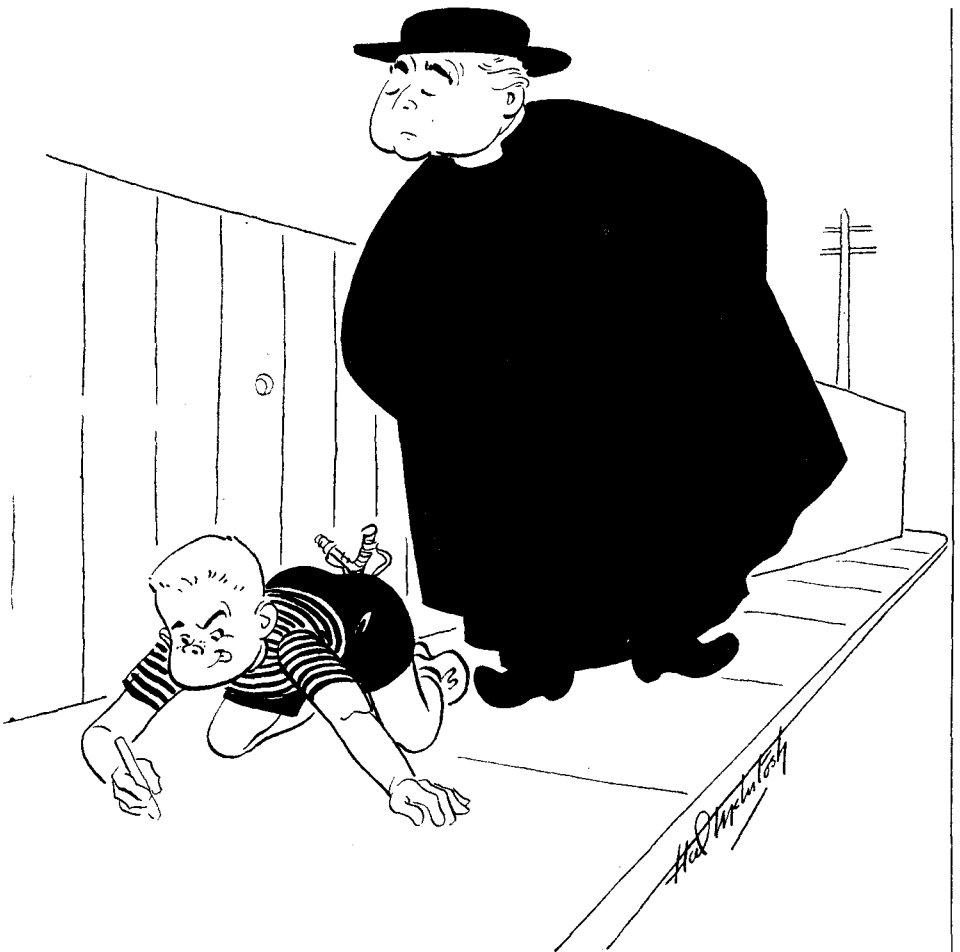

said, "but I guess I can thank her for hitting the front page on my very first day in Hollywood."

My father, who was listening on an extension, and who always had a weakness for blondes, cut in, "That's where you belong, my dear—and in headlines a foot high." . . .

"WRITTEN ON THE WIND" isn't the only new novel in which S-E-X plays a dominant part. Edmund Wilson's "Memoirs of Hecate County" is so full of it, and provides such clinical detail, that the Boston bluenoses probably will have wielded their snickersnee before this column appears in print. More interesting to toilers in the book business will be his blistering story of the rise and fall of "Haynes and Kendall, Publishers," featuring an oblique wallop at a recognizable fellow critic Wilson seems to resent and envy in equal measure. Mr. Wilson's literary style, of course, is impeccable. "Hecate," incidentally, was a Greek goddess of magic and witchcraft. The Romans had another name for her: "Trivia." . . . Another book that will delight the soul of any publisher who ever has had to play lackey to a pernickety author is Samuel Webster's "Mark Twain, Business Man." . . . Trade Winds also recommends "New York," a book of stunning photographs by Andreas Feininger, and Jack Goodman's anthology, "While You Were Gone," in which a number of experts review wartime life in the United States. . . . I must mention, too, a little honey called "Duchess Hotspur," by Rosamund Marshall, the ultimate in frantic attempts to observe the a-manatees and illicit a few smoldering ambers from the bed and bawd market. I herewith quote:

> Percy possessed all the love-arts of all women, but she used them with the unrestrained passion of a novice that left Tom breathless, wondering why this bounty had befallen him. . . . There was a ripeness of beauty about her like a tree in the sun, the branches laden heavy with fruit. Could a man tire of a downy peach, or a velvet plum, or a golden pear? His hands must needs be tempted to reach and pluck again and again! . . .
>
> The blaze from the hearth fire was no hotter than their loving. When Percy rose from the newspaper bed, inked words were stamped on one rosy buttock, words from an old Gazette. It read backward, but Tom's eyes, experienced in type-reading, could decipher the imprint: "A CONTINUATION OF CERTAINE PRIVILEGES." . . .

They forgot to put Miss Marshall's picture on the jacket flap.

BENNETT CERF.

"From where I sit"

THIS EVEN TYPE does not reveal the trembling with which these words were set down. Sitting here warm and comfortable, attached to the outside world only by whistling elevators, company policy, and agents' phone calls, I have just been affected vicariously but nevertheless strongly by the reading of **General Wainwright's Story.**

It is still long before publishing date as I write this, and I cannot vouch for what the critics may say of this book. But to me at least, one thing is unimportant—the style of the book. BOB CONSIDINE prepared and edited the General's words, but even if it had been written with the left foot, it would have made little difference to the value of the story.

If you were on a quiz program and were asked what **General Wainwright's Story** is, you probably would say, without ever having read the book, something about the surrender at Corregidor, the Death March, and the fact that Wainwright was cruelly treated in Japanese prison camps until the Russians and the atomic bomb came to liberate him, and MacArthur's eyes once again met his. You would probably win for your answer $64, a Nash Kelvinator, and two tickets to some theatre in Boise. But if I were the sponsor of that quiz program, you would get nothing if you could not see the significance of the story.

Here was an honest, courageous American, thoroughly familiar with his trade. Like millions of other Americans, he was to become familiar with death, and to know that, like it or not, this is one world. Finally, after years of suffering, he was made a free man again by the Russians and the atomic bomb. Made free by the Russians whom we fear and the atomic bomb which we fear, and maybe you, dear reader, can tell me which we fear more.

To be sure, technically we are at peace. But are we free, you and Wainwright and I? Are we free from fear, for instance? Wainwright tells what he fears and what he thinks we ought to do about it. I think you ought to find out what he thinks.

paul

DOUBLEDAY

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Seeing Things

DISNEY AND THE DANE

OF COURSE, I wanted him to like it. I can't deny this. If I did, I would lie in my paternal teeth. Every parent knows the same hopes, the same fears when *that* afternoon at last comes around.

For both of us, this Saturday matinee was an adventure. For him, because it was the first time he had ever seen "Hamlet"; for me, because I was seeing it with him. And "Hamlet" shared with a boy of nine is "Hamlet" rediscovered.

He had seen other plays. "The Rose and the Ring," for example, as done, and charmingly done, by the children of the King-Coit School. This was his initiation. In it he had found nothing to doubt, everything to believe, and suspense almost unbearable. But that had been at least five years back, when both he and the world were younger.

Since then he had seen "It Happens on Ice." He had laughed at the clowns, marvelled at the spectacle, and in a voice filled with dread asked at the conclusion of each number, "Is it all over now?" He had also seen "Oklahoma!" He had come to it, Victrola-prepared, knowing all of its songs. "Neat" was the word for "Oklahoma!"

But Maurice Evans in the G.I. "Hamlet"—this was something else. He did not know its song. My fingers were crossed. As I say, I hoped he would like it. You never know; you can never tell.

No form of cruelty is more cruel than exposing the young, when still too young, to books and plays ill-fated enough to have become classics. It is a murderous error; the kind of sulphurous mistake, of more than paving-stone size, for which only good intentions can be responsible. The fact that both the living and the dead are equally defenseless against such foul play is the measure of its meanness.

To make a chore out of what should be a pleasure, to put the curse of obligation on what was meant to be absorbing, is to kill in the child the willingness to be pleased, and in the classic the ability to please. Masterpieces are masterpieces not because such grim conspirators as parents or teachers have told us that they are good. They are masterpieces because they tell us so themselves.

Yet they cannot be expected to speak for themselves until we are ready to hear them. Not to coin a phrase, there's the rub. For that happy conjunction of the man and the moment is as necessary for a book and its reader as Matthew Arnold knew it to be for the emergence of greatness in this world. When that moment will tick itself off, no one can foretell. It depends entirely upon the book and the individual.

Fortunately "Hamlet" can be approached on various levels. The difficulties of its language may pass

unnoticed. Its inner anguishes may not be comprehended. Still it tells a story—and such a story. To the modern, no less than to the Elizabethan, its action remains the first of its excitements. The Ph.D.'s move in only when the playgoers have moved out.

Quite naturally, one would expect a child to be more interested in what happens in the play than in what happens within the Prince's mind. But nowadays a boy comes to "Hamlet"—oh, perish the word!—"conditioned" in ways productive of unforeseeable results.

These past four years, for example. They have accustomed him and his friends to every known weapon of mechanized destruction. After frequent newsreel exposures to, and hourly imitations of, the crash of buzz bombs, the drone of airplane motors, the rumble of tanks, the rat-at-tat of machine guns, the swish of rockets, and the roar of navy guns, would a world seem unbearably tame in which death is brought about by mere poison or the quiet click of foils?

Then the comics, those appalling polychrome termites which eat their way into every home, no matter how well-guarded; into every weekly allowance, no matter how small; and into every budding mind, no matter how eager. They cannot be kept out. No doubt, in fairness they should not be. The young ought not to be exiled from an experience, common to their generation, which will one day prove a group memory. But what chance would Mary Arden's boy have against Blondie, the Lone Ranger, Superman, or Super-Rabbit? Or Barney Baxter, Flash Gordon, the Phantom, and Mandrake the Magician? Was Captain Marvel the best homework for Shakespeare? Or Gandy and Sourpuss the proper preparation for Rosencrantz and Guildenstern? I must admit I wondered; more and more as that Saturday approached; with ever-increasing alarm.

And what about Disney, the greatest Walt the world has ever known since Whitman? In toy form in the nursery. In color in the comics. In books beyond counting. Above all, in the movies. Disney everywhere. Disney delectable because destructive. His creatures asking for no pity; creating pleasure by pain, living only to sock, and having socked or been socked, socking again. Could the Dane hope to compete with Donald Duck, Pluto, Monstro, the Big Bad Wolf, the Three Little Pigs, Dopey, and most particularly the redoubtable Mickey? Again I wondered. And hoped. And had my doubts.

How to unroll the red carpet for "Hamlet" was another question. I mean to prepare his mind for what he was to see without putting upon it the stigmata of homework. I mentioned the play at breakfast for a week, naming it with as much excitement as if its title were synonymous with a fishing expedition, or a visit to the Hayden Planetarium, the Museum of Natural History, Schrafft's, or the Fleet.

Like many another apprehensive parent, I even fell back on the Lambs. Not for long—for only two pages, to be exact. I found my own eyes glazed as swiftly as his when I read that interminable first paragraph which begins: "Gertrude, Queen of Denmark, becoming a widow by the sudden death of King Hamlet, in less than two months after his death married his brother Claudius, which was noted by all people at the time for a strange act of indiscretion, or unfeelingness, or worse: etc. and etc."

Before I knew it, Saturday was upon us.

We lunched first. Not at home. At a restaurant. At Giovanni's, in feast-day style worthy of the event. While

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MARTHA SCOTT • JOHN BEAL • VICKI CUMMINGS
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with MYRON McCORMICK MINOR WATSON MARGALO GILLMORE
HUDSON Theater, 44th Street, East of B'way.

he sipped a preliminary coke downstairs and I an old-fashioned, I tried, in simpler language than the Lambs', to explain what he would see. It took more explanation than I had thought it would. I noticed that his eyes brightened whenever the Ghost was mentioned. Or whenever, in my narration, a cadaver bit the dust.

"Why don't they use pistols?" he asked while I was outlining the duel scene with its multiple jobs for the court mortician. It was only when I had described the poisoned foil, the poisoned wine, and the fury of the duel that he appeared to forgive Shakespeare for not having anticipated the age of the machine.

When he demanded, "They won't really be dead, will they?", I knew he was interested. For him, make-believe and reality were still blissfully, terrifyingly one—at least up to an uncertain point.

Traffic held us up so that we were a minute or so late in getting to the theatre. Hence we missed the first scene on the parapet. But a friendly Negro doorman did his bit for Shakespeare that afternoon.

"Yessuh," the doorman said to him, "the Ghost is walkin' now. It's too dark to go in there. You gotta wait. But never you fear—he'll walk again."

While we were waiting for the first scene to be over, I assured him for the tenth time that the Ghost was not real, and tried to tell him how the illusion of his disappearance would be achieved.

The auditorium was dark when, with other stragglers, we pushed our way in. After we reached our seats, I could hardly persuade him to take off his coat and muffler. His eyes were glued on the stage. I was pleased to see how, even for the young, "Hamlet" sweeps forward on its own feet without having to rely on footnotes.

He listened to every word. He was never bored. He sat far back in his seat, relaxed, only during the soliloquies. Whenever there was a threat

SOLUTION OF LAST WEEK'S DOUBLE-CROSTIC (No. 626)

P. McGINLEY:

ENIGMA AT ALTMAN'S

It is a strange, miraculous thing
About department stores,
How elevators upward wing
By twos and threes and fours.

. . . . . .

Newton, himself, beneath his tree,
Would ponder this and frown:
How what goes up so frequently
So seldom cometh down.

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NATIONAL, W. 41st St., Eves. incl. Sun. 8:30
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SHUBERT W. 44 St. Eves. 8:30. Mats. Wed. & Sat. 2:30

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Book and Lyrics by OSCAR HAMMERSTEIN 2nd
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Staged by HASSARD SHORT
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Directed by MR. LUNT
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Most Famous Musical Comedy
THE RED MILL
EDDIE FOY, JR.
Jack Whiting, Odette Myrtil, Dorothy Stone
46th ST. THEATRE—W. of Bway.—CI 6-6075
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A New Play by EMMET LAVERY
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ROYALE THEATRE W. 45th St. • Eves. 8:30 MATS. WED. & SAT.

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of action, he pushed forward. Whenever the Ghost appeared, he stood up. Once, when an off-stage cannon sounded in the darkness, he came close to turning a somersault into the lap of the woman who was sitting beyond him.

"Holy smokes, what's that?" he cried.

The intermission almost broke his heart. When I suggested that he go out with me while I had a cigarette, he was at first unwilling to leave. His was that nicest of nice fears. He was afraid they might start without waiting for the audience.

On the sidewalk we encountered the doorman for the second time. "Did you see the Ghost?" he beamed. "Well, you'll see him again. He ain't done walkin'."

On the way back to our seats came, "Is Mr. Maurice Evans married?"

"No," I replied, "I don't think so."

"Why doesn't he marry Ophelia?" he suggested. "She's a mighty pretty girl."

He was standing bolt upright during the whole of the play-within-the play scene. The death of Polonius grieved him. "He's such a funny, nice old man; he made me laugh." But he started laughing again when Hamlet reached behind the curtains for Polonius's body, to say, "I'll lug the guts into the neighboring room."

He jumped as if dynamited at that moment when Laertes and his followers were storming the castle. And I almost had to hold him to prevent his crawling over the seat in front of him during the duel.

After Hamlet's body has been carried by the four captains up the stairs and the curtain had fallen, he stayed—taped to his seat—applauding. He applauded, and applauded, and applauded.

"How'd you like it?" I asked in the taxi, homeward-bound.

"Gee, it was swell! I liked it better than 'Oklahoma!' " Then a pause. "I like it a little better than Donald Duck." Another pause—a long, reflective one. "A little more than kin, and less than kind.'—Gee! That's pretty, isn't it?"

JOHN MASON BROWN.

Five Desks in One Office

WINTER KILL. By Steve Fisher. New York: Dodd, Mead & Co. 1946. 208 *pp.* $2.50.

Reviewed by PHIL STONG

THIS book should really have gone to the dramatic critic—three acts, time lapse of three weeks, one set—an amusing Saroyan set, but more on the Cain or Burnett side as regards action.

The set is one of the very cheap buildings on lower Fifth Avenue with "Office Space To Let." This office has five desks which are occupied by the hero, a private detective, whose sole business is arranging the only cause for divorce in New York State; a bill collector who is mildly handicapped by the fact that he believes every hard luck story he hears; a literary agent, once an accountant, who has figured that by undercutting reading fees to one dollar he can make a living—and does by a slight margin; a wholesaler of toy novelties who offers up a daily prayer to a little sign, "Sell Macy's."

The fifth party is at first a mobster who has joined a hotel "protective association" and promptly moves up to the elegance of a single office some floors above. He is replaced by a little dress designer who does incredible things with broad patterns of reds and yellows after some south-European reminiscences. "Mousy," the mobster, when he goes up to the promised land of a single office on the floors above, happens to shoot a policeman on the way. When he tries to make the "investigator" a go-between on some "protection" money, there is a good deal of trouble with shooting.

The action of the story keeps it alive, but the essence is in the hopefully hopeless little men at the desks, who are united by failure. They cling to immoderate prospects but know that nothing good will happen to them—and in that they are finally mistaken in a climax which is incredibly coincidental till it is explained.

This is an amusing story, but smoothed and expanded it is a play rather than a novel.

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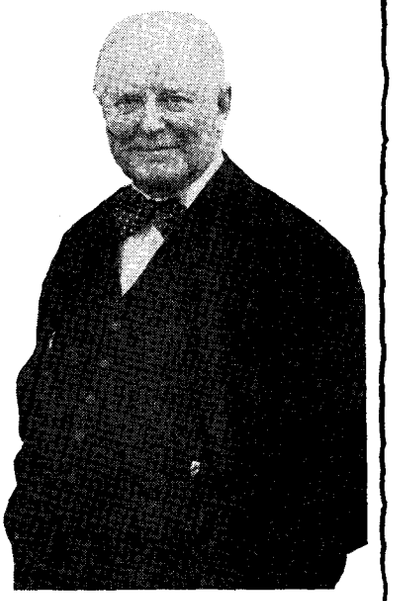
What is greatness in Autobiography?



"Into the select company of the world's great autobiographers stepped... William Allen White," remarks *Newsweek*, in one of the many enthusiastic reviews which greeted the long-awaited AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF WILLIAM ALLEN WHITE.

Charles Lee, writing in the *Philadelphia Record*, agrees: "Put it down, and without exaggeration: the late Sage of Emporia has written his greatest story in covering his own tumultous life," and Henry Seidel Canby calls this book "probably the last of the great autobiographies of the nineteenth century." All of which brings up the question of what makes for greatness in autobiography.

WHAT THE CRITICS HAVE TO SAY

Is a book's greatness determined by its permanent value? R. L. Duffus, writing in the *New York Times*, seems to think so. He says William Allen White's book "will be read as long as anyone is interested in what happened in Kansas and in the United States between the year 1868 and the year 1923," and Walter Johnson, in the *Chicago Sun* reminds us that "perhaps no other person... reflects the expansion and development of America in its many phases quite so completely."

Gerald W. Johnson, in the *New York Herald-Tribune*, says Will White's autobiography is "a picture of American life in one of its most significant phases, one that every man who would understand America must know."

IS IT WRITING ABILITY?

The writing ability of Will White was recognized by the magazine editors who were glad to pay him $1,000 an article, as well as by the Kansans who read his editorials. Of this quality, R. L. Duffus writes: "The old magic of the White pen (or typewriter) is in his characterizations of Mark Hanna... William McKinley... Hamlin Garland... Mary Elizabeth Leese... William Jennings Bryan... Cleveland... Mark Twain... Theodore Roosevelt... Ida Tarbell... Ray Stannard Baker... Lincoln Steffens."

IS IT THE MAN HIMSELF?

Most great autobiographies have been written by men who possessed great frankness and personal charm, and this is true of Will White. Edward Weeks, in the *Atlantic Monthly*, says: "Will White writes himself down as open, as many-sided, and I think as representative an American as has lived between Lincoln and Hoover," and Orville Prescott, in the *New York Times*, adds: "Reading his book inspires increased respect for William Allen White, the public figure; renewed admiration for an engaging writer and sincere affection for a generous, loyal, lovable man."

IS IT "GOOD READING"?

Newsweek remarks, "so full of utterly delightful reading is White's book it is almost impossible to say which part of it is best... William Allen White's autobiography can take its place with the best of American writing, from Mark Twain on." Charles Lee, in the *Philadelphia Record* is of the opinion that "it ought to go like a prairie wildfire with America's literate public... it will hold you not only by the sheer magic of the narrator's personality but by its various and vivid content," and Orville Prescott adds,"... an altogether delightful book, mellow and wise and humorous, wonderfully good reading."

WHAT DO READERS THINK?

So much for what the critics think of THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF WILLIAM ALLEN WHITE, and of the qualities of greatness. As a reader, *what is your opinion?* What autobiography do *you* like best? What qualities must an autobiography have to be called "great"? The Macmillan Company will be glad to hear what readers have to say on the subject. Address Promotion Department, The Macmillan Company, 60 Fifth Avenue, New York City 11.

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He Had Nine Stepmothers

MY AFRICA. By Mbonu Ojike. New York: John Day. 1946. 350 *pp.* $3.75.

Reviewed by PATRICK PUTNAM

OJIKE pleads for the independence of Nigeria, the British colony where he was born. His book is a good job—a very good job—but a very uneven one. He is ineffective when he generalizes about his continent of Africa. But when he tells of his own life with his own countrymen, he gets them into our minds as people, some bad, some good, but real, and grown-up. He makes no attempt to palm them off as gentle children of nature of the Rousseau breed.

"How my father married as many as ten wives," says Ojike, "is a novel which cannot be adequately treated in a paragraph, no, not even in a chapter." Fortunately, however, he does not leave the reader's curiosity entirely unassuaged. Ojike's mother, although only the second, was the boldest of the ten, and often unafraid to be their spokesman. Even when she didn't have her powerful union behind her, she knew just how far she could go with the patriarch.

The first part of the book is largely a lively narrative of "Life with Father" in an Ibo village, and lively narrative is what Ojike can do surpassingly well. The tale of how he grew up, his mother's youngest; how he out-manouvered his father, whom he loved and who loved him, and so ran away to mission school, full thirty miles from home; and how he persisted, until, bound for America, he left his village, and women and children wept because they thought he would be frozen to death—all this is excellent and, in subject, quite new to the American reader.

But the second part, which is obviously, to the author, the more important, is sadly full of historical platitudes and anthropological inexactitudes. He argues that "Africa has a respectable culture," that there should be "African-American coöperation," that Nigeria should have "political freedom." His argument is weak. It does not lack material. On the contrary. But it does lack, and to a deplorable extent, order and conciseness. Typical of the disorder of the whole second part is that of his five interesting appendices. In one of them, "An African Who's Who," in no apparent order whatsoever, whether geographical, chronological, or alphabetical, a paragraph on Apolo Kagwa, prime minister of the British protectorate of Uganda, who died in 1927, precedes one of the Pharaoh Ikhnaton of Egypt, who died some three thousand years ago, which, in turn, is followed by one on the Emir of Katsina, who "is one of the most progressive kings of Nigeria."

It should certainly be in the chapter entitled "Nigeria and Political Freedom" that Ojike should present clearly just what it is in foreign domination that galls the Central Africans, and just what he, with his white man's education, proposes to establish as an alternative regime. Unfortunately, not only is the argument of this chapter clouded with extraneous matter, but also much pertinent evidence is scattered haphazardly throughout other chapters.

Though born of sincere feeling on his part, the very title of the book is too ambitious. Of "My AFRICA" he cannot write well. He has seen less of that vast continent than I have, probably less, even, of Nigeria. But when it is about "MY Africa" that he writes—about his own Ibo people, and how they lived in their country before the whites came to push them around, and how they would like to be rid of the intruder—then Ojike writes both amusingly and convincingly.

It is fortunate that a boy who was born in a happy, dirty, illiterate Central African village, who was a babe in the arms of a mother hiding from British guns, who went to the white man's school against the wishes of his to say the least stern father, who began to learn English only when he was ten—it is fortunate that such a boy had enough determination and luck, and found enough liberality on the part of his British rulers, to be able to come to the United States. He is only in his thirties now, and should finish the studies he has already begun toward a Ph.D. at the University of Chicago. But general African history and anthropology are not his forte now. And he should bear always in mind two texts in his own book, one, that most Africans love big words, and, two, the last sentence in his chapter on "Courtship and Marriage," to wit: "I have no idea how African couples spend their honeymoon, because I have not yet had mine."

Even in the second part, however, under rather forbidding chapter headings, lively bits of narrative turn up with pleasing frequency. Some of the best reflect the surprises an Ibo gets when he sees how the tribesmen of the United States regulate their lives. He is shocked by the housewifely American husband he dined with in Illinois, who cooked the meal and washed the dishes while the wife talked politics. Indeed, he is no adulator of all that is American. Nor is he an apostate scorner of the Central African ways he was born to. Of polygamy, as it exists in that

—From the book

"My father sitting at the center, Abanogu at the outside left and I at the outside right. . . . He insisted that we dress like him—simple village clothes, no shoes."

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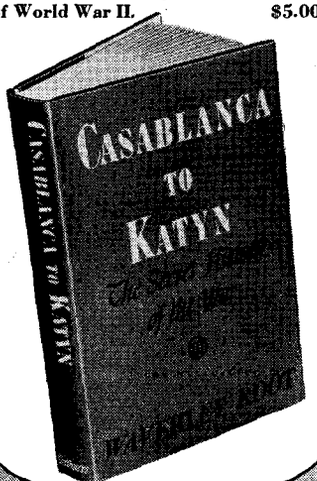

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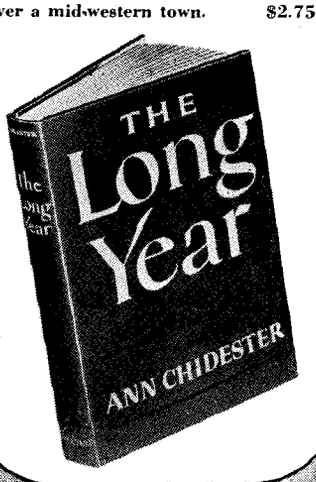

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milieu, he has some good things to say. Of cannibalism, he considers the reprehensible part to be the killing of people rather than the eating of them afterwards.

As cracker-barrel philosopher, Ojike holds his own with the best the late departed New England general store had to offer. As political scientist, let him cultivate himself for a few years more before he tries again to speak in this way. But as a journalist, a master of the narrative style, may he give us another good book, this year if possible—now, while the iron is hot, and the whole question of colonies has not yet frozen back to the shameful shape of pre-war days. What a story he could write if he dared a visit to the southern part of these United States; and then, with the backing of his publishers, managed to extract from Britain, Belgium, France, and Portugal passports to travel throughout the regions of Central Africa which they hold in subjugation, to see and describe peoples far more oppressed than those of Nigeria, which, of all Britain's vast colonial possessions in Central Africa, she runs in the least Hitlerian manner.

The Poet of the Revolution

THE LAST POEMS OF PHILIP FRENEAU. Edited by Lewis Leary. New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press. 1945. 136 *pp.* + xiii. $3.75.

Reviewed by ROBERT E. SPILLER

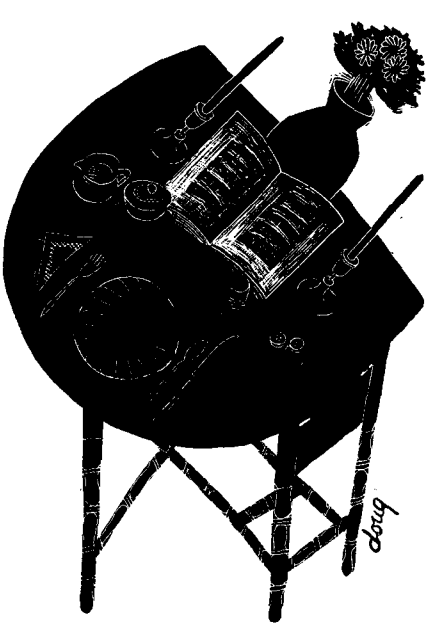
PHILIP FRENEAU was the first poet of our republic in the days when it was coming into being. He was the poetic voice of our Revolution and of the liberal party after the Revolution was accomplished. But he was also the bearer to us of the eighteenth century enlightenment, of its spirit of reason and released emotion, of its characteristically American blend of action and speculation. We today should know Freneau better and cherish him more fondly.

The publication of these "Last Poems" will not help in our rediscovery except, by their reprinting in book form, to remind us that he wrote more and better poetry than this. The product of his late years, when he was embittered by personal and political disappointments and was virtually in retirement on his "sandy acres" in Monmouth County, New Jersey, they are merely the overlooked remnant of his work, rescued from the final discard by publication in local newspapers. Mr. Leary, author of the standard biography, has done a further service to his memory by completing the canon of his work. Here the immediate case may rest.

But the modern popular neglect of Freneau cannot be allowed to rest so easily. The most vigorous, if not the most polished, literary mind of the Revolutionary era, he should be more widely known and understood. His poetry is more original—more authentically American — than any between his day and Whitman's.

The first modern student of Freneau, F. L. Pattee, rested the case primarily on his war poetry, calling him "The Poet of the Revolution." To that title he has every claim. He expressed in verse, as Tom Paine expressed in prose, the spirit of rebellion and the hope of liberty. He sang the victorious march of armies and the heroic death of gallant sea captains; he wrote odes to liberty and the rights of man; he exposed the hard lot of the common soldier and the cruelties of the prison ship; he flung curses at Britain and he celebrated the triumph of Washington with a poetic wreath. But by 1820 he was already long out of date, although he lived on for twelve years more, crowded out of the new literary magazines and reviews by less vehement and more skilled turners of verse. Bryant, with "Thanatopsis" written, could speak of him by then as "a writer of inferiour verse . . . distinguished by a coarse strength of sarcasm, and abounding with allusions to passing events." The Revolution was no longer an issue, and its poet had become old fashioned and quaint, as Chaucer had at one time seemed.

A later editor, H. H. Clark, rested



the case on quite different ground. Freneau, he pointed out, was a philosopher-poet, more significant for his vigorous acceptance of "the religion of nature and humanity" than for his occasional verse. In religion he should be bracketed with Paine, Jefferson, and Franklin; in American poetry he stood alone as spokesman for the enlightenment. From the Burnsean lyrics on the native "wild honey-suckle" and the "caty-did," through the contemplative verse on the Indian burying ground, to the versified philosophy on science, God, and nature, he was a poet of depth and enduring purpose. Again reflective of an era, this deeper Freneau —the author too of the essays signed by the "Philosopher of the Forest"— should command more serious attention as an effective satirist and a poet of ideas.

And finally Mr. Leary confronted the case biographically as a study in failure. "Caught mercilessly between the necessity of remaining true to his own highest aspiration and the equally compelling necessity of bending often to degrading means for its attainment, . . . Freneau was the young radical who never forgets his quarrel with a world which makes no room for him."

As long as America can stay young and radical—or at least remember that she was once so—Freneau will be her first and one of her most characteristic poets. His modern revival is evidence that the spirits of youth and of radicalism are not yet quite dead.

One might profit by considering the possible course of our poetry had it more fully accepted his leadership instead of rejecting him and turning to Bryant. The long years of apprenticeship to the English tradition might have given place to a continued and courageous experimenting directly with the American experience. Emerson's metaphysical poetry might have been better understood and less criticized for its lack of melody; Poe might have spent less of his time quarreling with other editors and the public; Whitman would have been no surprise; even Emily Dickinson might have been earlier tempted from her retreat, and Carl Sandburg would probably now seem, even more than he does, our proper voice.

However futile such speculation, it may serve to emphasize Freneau's place at the head of an American tradition, a tradition naturalistic and philosophical, uncompromising and rugged, in touch with facts and aware of values.

Yes, we should certainly read more Freneau—even these rather pathetic "last poems."

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Edited by Edwin Seaver

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Tempest in a China Teapot

FLORENCE AYSCOUGH AND AMY LOWELL: Correspondence of a Friendship. Edited with a Preface by Harley Farnsworth MacNair. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. 1946. 289 *pp.* $3.75.

Reviewed by WITTER BYNNER

AT first glance what is there to say about this book—for a general audience? Mr. MacNair, the editor, with an honest, proper, and due respect for his wife, Florence Ayscough, has very carefully presented and documented her voluminous correspondence with Amy Lowell concerning their collaboration in translating the Chinese poems included in "Fir-Flower Tablets." At first glance, because of my long preoccupation with translating Chinese poetry into English I felt, as I say, that John Gould Fletcher and I—Eunice Tietjens and Arthur Ficke having died—might be the only two persons in America who would read every paragraph of it with close interest. Except for personal passages and an appended garden essay by Miss Lowell, the book presents only correspondence between two very industrious women concerning the Chinese poems they selected to translate and their method of translating them. On careful rereading of the book, I could but hope that there might be a considerable audience led through these letters to realize the infinite pains that go into such translation. Industry, industry!

In a letter to Harriet Monroe Miss Lowell wrote:

> I have made a discovery which I have never before seen mentioned in any Occidental book on Chinese poetry, but which I think must be well-known in Chinese literature; namely, that the roots of the characters are the things which give the poetry its overtones, taking the place of adjectives and imaginary writing with us. . . . Mrs. Ayscough quite agrees with me in this.

The fact of the matter, fully evidenced in the bulk of the book, was that Mrs. Ayscough had made the discovery and that Miss Lowell quite agreed with *her*. The discovery was the fact that Chinese ideographs are compounded of a root idea with other ideas stroked alongside, such as the familiar pictorial word for quarrel: a roof with two women under it. And Mrs. Ayscough had suggested to Miss Lowell that in translating Chinese poems these implicit connotations of individual words should be translated too. Robert Payne in "Forever China" remarks: "The ideographs remain the same; perhaps even the interpretation remains the same; but each ideograph is overlaid with three thousand years of experience and gestation." According to Arthur Waley, "the beauty of the original is bound up with the exact 'auras'—the associative value of the words used."

I agree, as anyone knowing Chinese response to poetry would agree, that for the native who sees ideographs in print or in the air as he hears them, the underlying strokes vibrate like bracketed notes on a violin; but I still maintain, as I did when the idea was first broached to me of translating these chords or

adumbrations, that in wording the enlargement there would be danger of over-stress and over-weighting. As Dr. Kiang Kang-hu commented when I showed him some early Ayscough-Lowell versions: "This heavy wording tips the poem over." I could not see—and thought my objection fair—that in relation to a poem as a whole the weight of Miss Lowell's phrase, "whirled water of meeting streams," improved upon the direct meaning, whirlpool. In fact I preferred the swift simplicity of the compounded English word. Should a Chinese in translating an English poem give the word breakfast its dictionary meaning, "the meal with which the fast of the night is broken," or expand daybreak into "the day breaking through the night?" For me the stretching out of the Chinese phrase into its ideographic parts definitely distorted its proportionate place in the poem for the sake of an interruptive quaintness. Would it help a Westerner's response to a Chinese poet's thoughts of home to have it translated according to the ideograph, a pig under a roof? (The two women apparently came later.) In the other direction why should what we think of with sufficiently exotic meaning as a phoenix be called a "silver-crested love-pheasant?"

Mrs. Ayscough was afraid of "the naked languages of Europe," too bare for her as compared with the branching jewel-tree words of Cathay. She resisted the fact, moreover, even when Chinese scholars affirmed it, that the words chosen by the T'ang poets were commonplace, colloquial. The Chinese are realists. She was a romantic. She never realized that the exactly fitting connection of commonplace words could make poetry. And Miss Lowell unfortunately acquiesced in the romantic turn. "It sounds pretty," wrote Miss Lowell, "these versions are attractive,"—"our elegant little nose-gay." She might have been manufacturing Christmas cards. Both women condescendingly resented, in Arthur Waley's friendly and tempered review of their book, the reminder that "the colloquial of the T'ang dynasty differed very little from the language of poetry." When Li Po wrote about the clouds, resemblance to Yan Kuei-fei's robes, Miss Lowell with Bostonian precision had to uproot and specify the clothing as "upper garments" and "lower garments," apparently approving the fact that the ideograph meant total and not partial clothing. I grant fancy in the idea that varying clouds reflected varying colors or layers of clothing; but fancy is the very weakness from which T'ang poetry for the most part is free.

When I met Mrs. Ayscough in Shanghai in 1920, in spite of her avowed determination to be "discreet" (see below), she informed me of her purpose to search the roots "to their utmost forks" and to use the forks in English. I warned her of the danger of such ramification if put into English wording. She quoted Miss Lowell's agreement with her and I told her that I thought they were being industriously wrong-headed. I had no idea that I was giving grave offense. Mrs. Ayscough in Shanghai, Miss Lowell in New York and Boston, presented an impeccable front, granting me apparently my right to differ with them as to points in the technique of translation and seeming to welcome my zeal in our common wish to acquaint the Western world with Chinese poetry. But this correspondence reveals pettiness going on behind the screen.

Since many pages of the book discuss me, I feel it only fair to quote a few of the passages for better or worse. Mrs. Ayscough to Miss Lowell: "Witter Bynner is working away in Peking. He is to be down here about a fortnight hence. . . . I shall be very discreet about our work." "Where, I think, he has made a mistake is in

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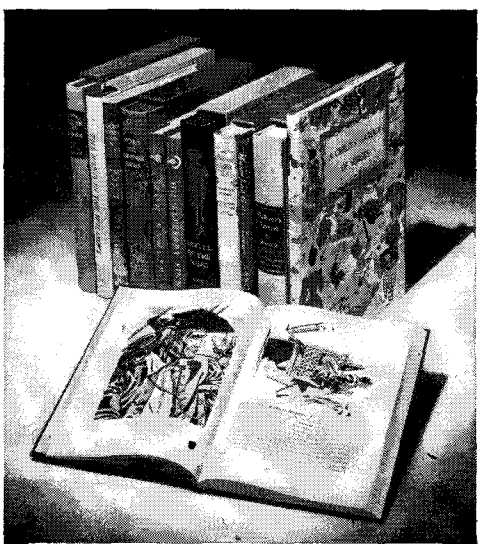

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choosing an anthology. In the first place, three hundred poems ought to take him about three hundred years to translate. But the principal trouble is this: an anthology always represents the taste of the people who have picked out the poems, and, in the case of a Chinese collection, it represents the taste of scholars who have an entirely different point of view from ours.

"The result is that the poems Mr. Bynner has chosen are fearfully difficult, and complicated." "It makes me so angry to have him come out here and gallop through a T'ang anthology of three hundred poems. He simply can't do such a thing—as I told a little reportress." And Miss Lowell to Mrs. Ayscough: a cable to London: "Bynner has just published 'Hermit on Hill' in *Post*. Wish to answer in correspondence column with original text, your notes, and my version, and sign your name. Do you approve. Cable answer." (According to the book there was never an answer.) "I think it would be a great pity to track Witter Bynner's poems down with the purpose of showing him up. I think we had better ignore him entirely and go ahead with our own work . . . There's one thing I wish you could find out, and that is something about the man who taught him, Dr. Kiang Kang-hu, because Witter Bynner is going round blowing like anything, saying that he had no idea until he reached China how highly his collaborator was considered there by scholars . . . Also, can you not give me some sort of an account of Mr. Nung (Mrs. Ayscough's teacher) and make it sound as grand as possible—to show that we have a native Chinaman behind us, for in *Asia*, Bynner said that he did not believe that anyone, even though born in China, could really get the nuances of the poems, which was, of course, an attempt to cut the ground under your feet . . . He throws round a lot of big names of people he met in China, such as Dr. Hu Shih . . . Princess Der Ling . . . Dr. Ku Hung-ming . . . According to Witter, all these people have greatly praised his work, which I can well believe, for they know nothing of the English language . . . *(sic!)* What he says of Dr. Kiang . . . sounds beautifully and may be true, but the position he (Kiang) held here was in Berkeley, California, and not in one of the older universities . . . I think it would be a great mistake to pay any attention to him (Bynner) whatever. I should merely like to know these facts in order to punch his pretensions to powder in case it may be necessary in private conversation."

I remember wondering why Miss Lowell — who used to call me, I thought jovially, her "official enemy" because we differed as to points in poetic technique—gloated so heavily when she said in 1921, the year "Fir-Flower Tablets" was published, "We have beaten you to it;" but I find running through this book an undercurrent of the anxiety expressed in her exhortation to Mrs. Ayscough, "Somebody will get ahead of us if we do not hurry." Time and again in their letters both ladies seemed to think that I was in haste. I venture in the light of 1946 to note that eight years after 1921, years of incessant work, Doctor Kiang and I published "The Jade Mountain" and that twenty-four years after 1921 with the generous help of Arthur Waley and others it was issued again, the sixth edition revised and improved. The ladies really need not have hurried.

In 1922 Miss Lowell wrote: "Witter Bynner's book does not appear, and I do not think it ever will. I think we have given him a dreadful shock." In 1921 she had written, after an editor's suggestion, that I review "Fir-Flower Tablets": "I was amused at the idea of Mr. Bynner as reviewer for the book. I do not think that he would have helped at all."

She had disliked a review of her book in *The Chinese Students' Monthly* and wrote the editor: "I wonder whether you think such writing is liable to promote a pleasant feeling between our two countries." And she wrote Mrs. Ayscough about a dismal attempt to enjoy an evening with a Chinese professor whom she had bidden to her house: "I gave him a brief outline in my letter of the kind of thing I wanted him to answer without mentioning any specific things. It seems to have given the gentleman's feet chills . . . I do not find it easy to understand these Chinamen; nor do they find it easy to understand me."

Inside Wartime Hungary

MORE WAS LOST. By Eleanor Perényi. Boston: Little, Brown & Co. 1946. 278 *pp.* $2.75.

Reviewed by RICHARD PLANT

THE Baroness Perényi is Eleanor Zaring Stone, Ethel Vance's daughter. It was on account of her that the author of "Escape" had to use a pseudonym. When Mrs. Stone's best-seller appeared, her daughter, who had married the Hungarian baron Zsiga Perényi, was still living on her husband's estate in—well, it was Czechoslovakia then, had been Hungary before, and was really peopled by Ruthenians, whom the Russians later claimed as one of their minorities. In between, the castle again was declared to stand on Hungarian soil, and since Hungary became an Axis member and Mrs. Stone's thriller had an outspoken anti-Axis slant, "Escape" had to appear under a pseudonym.

Mrs. Perényi's book falls into a familiar pattern. A normal, intelligent American girl of the upper classes marries into European nobility, lives with her husband's folks, and must adapt herself to the ways of the old world. Sometimes she succeeds, sometimes she doesn't.

Baroness Perényi's book is disarmingly unpretentious. It makes no attempt to be anything but an informal, conversational account of her personal experiences. She dislikes many things in feudal Hungary, and many others she relishes, notably old furniture and the native shrubs and flowers. Sometimes she gets ahead of her story, and sometimes she skips parts that are too personal to be told to strangers. The family takes so many trips to so many places that one sometimes feels as if one were seeing a Fitzpatrick travelogue, and one also meets many people all at once—usually *haute monde*, ministers, diplomats, politicians. One forgets them as quickly as one has met them: the whole book is like the conversation at a big dinner party where one has a good time but doesn't remember a thing afterwards.

Mrs. Perényi's feudal relatives and friends are not only indefatigable reactionaries, living firmly in the beliefs of the eighteenth century, but most of them seem to be intellectual hill-billies. There is never any conversation about books, not even about the native sagas and legends of which the aristocracy is said to be so fond. Her husband seems to be the black sheep because he not only has had an Oxford education but takes a lively interest in literary and political matters, and is progressive in a disillusioned and charming way. The book doesn't report Cousin Laci's or friend Bottka's opinions of Hitler, but one is tempted to bet that if they hated him it was because they considered the Fuehrer an Austrian upstart, and not because they disapproved of the Nazi tenets. But who wants to squabble with Cousin Laci, who is such a magnificent hunter? (There is, incidentally, a bad picture of him leading a parade of Hungarian farmers. The other pictures are not much better.)

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A Nurse's Odyssey

NO TIME FOR TEARS. By Lora Wood Hughes. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co. 1946. 305 pp. $3.

Reviewed by PHIL STONG

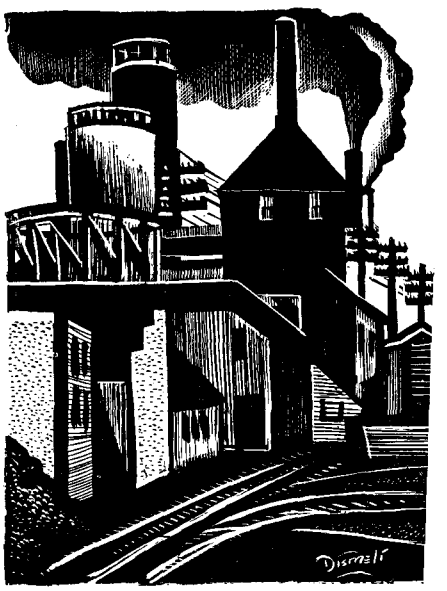
IT will be surprising if this book is not as well accepted as Dr. Heiser's "Odyssey;" it has the same warmth and simplicity and richness of episode. It is a nurse's Odyssey, and though her travels are limited, or unlimited, to North America, except for a spot of Honolulu, this is a rather large continent we have on our hands, with as much variety between Kansas and Alberta as one could find between Manila and Shanghai.

The author was born in Missouri, but that was merely technical, because when she was two months old, in 1873, the family went to Kansas. There, at six, the little girl apprehended the inexplicable contradiction of metaphysics—the co-existence of a good and beneficent God, and such an evil as pain. Partly to frustrate God's malice and partly to ameliorate His errors, in a sympathetic spirit, she worked from backwoods nursing to real expertness in technique and in human behavior.

The unhappy experiences of Mrs. Hughes's brief marriage are told with admirable reticence and probably would not be told at all if it were not necessary to establish a full background of her experiences as a woman—marriage, childbirth, and the not too common trial of a neurotic husband who deserted her from time to time and finally committed suicide. However much she was hurt by this as a person, it did not affect her intention; she had lost her child and her husband—there is a suggestion that she undertook the husband more as a nursing job than a romance—so she went to Honolulu to help the casualties of the Spanish-American War.

There she encountered the customary disorder of the American military in wartime. She does not state the fact, but her evidence suggests that the United States, after forcing a fight, had made about as much preparation as a Dead End kid. Battle casualties were almost negligible, but the hospital casualties were terrible. Wounds which would have been considered trivial in World War II resulted in amputations, or deaths, or one and then the other, in this last war of the century. Raw internes had charge of the Honolulu hospitals in many cases; Mrs. Hughes, who obviously had had only casual training, was welcomed as a thorough proficient and worked all hours till she had typhoid herself.

Back in the States to convalesce and rest on her father's and uncle's ranch in Montana, she convalesced splendidly and rested splendidly, too,



frequently for as much as ten minutes at a time till some neighbor's kid twenty miles away broke his leg or burst his appendix. Here she made a slight laxative from acquired materials with a candy dressing. Uncle Micah, who loved candy, snooped about and found the pills in a candy box. He ate them all. Curtain. Not final curtain, but curtain for this description.

From the ranch Mrs. Hughes went to an anonymous mining camp in Montana. One of her small adventures there, during a plague of measles, was to be sent as attending nurse to a House which was under quarantine. Her mild missionary efforts in the weeks she spent there may be forgiven since the beautiful upshot is one detail of her leaving. She finds one of the girls praying—the place has been unprofitable, of course, through the quarantine—and when Mrs. Hughes asks her gently for what she is praying, the girl says simply, "Business."

From there to the lumberjacks and ranches and barrens from Alberta to Puget Sound is much the same story, though certainly not lacking in variety. The lady took care of people who were hurt—she felt that she had to.

It is full of American color, profound in the simple manner—we'll say it is a good book and not try to say how magnificently good it is.

Your Literary I.Q.

By Howard Collins

FIRST PERSON SINGULAR

Can you identify the poets whose remarks are quoted below? Allowing 5 points for each correct answer, a score of 60 is par, 70 is very good, 80 or better is excellent. Answers are on page 49.

1. I have a bookcase, which is what many much better men have not.
2. My heart's in the Highlands, wherever I go.
3. I stood in Venice, on the Bridge of Sighs, a palace and a prison on each hand.
4. Of all the days that's in the week I dearly love but one day—and that's the day that comes betwixt a Saturday and Monday.
5. A damsel with a dulcimer in a vision once I saw.
6. I never saw a moor, I never saw the sea; yet know I how the heather looks, and what a wave must be.
7. I only ask that Fortune send a *little* more than I can spend.
8. I remember, I remember the house where I was born.
9. About the woodlands I will go to see the cherry hung with snow.
10. You to the left and I to the right, for the ways of men must sever.
11. Much have I traveled in the realms of gold, and many goodly states and kingdoms seen.
12. I think that I shall never see a poem lovely as a tree.
13. I've taken my fun where I found it; I've rogued an' I've ranged in my time.
14. I warmed both hands before the fire of life, it sinks, and I am ready to depart.
15. I must go down to the seas again, to the lonely sea and the sky.
16. Glad did I live, and gladly die, and I laid me down with a will.
17. I cannot eat but little meat, my stomach is not good; but sure I think that I can drink with him that wears a hood.
18. I hope to meet my Pilot face to face when I have crost the bar.
19. I sound my barbaric yawp over the roofs of the world.
20. My heart leaps up when I behold a rainbow in the sky.

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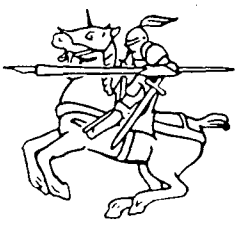

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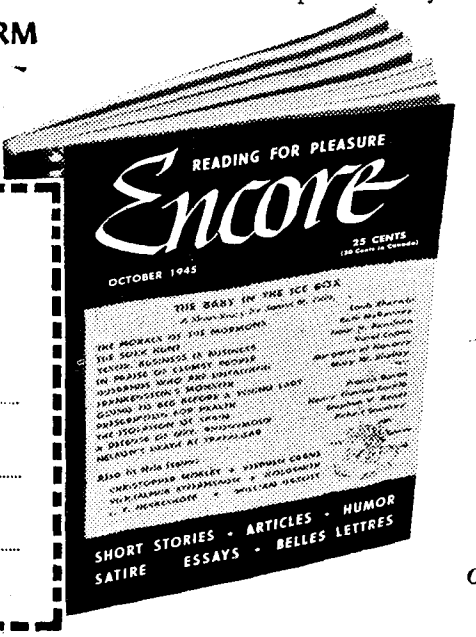

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Through Rose-Tinted Spectacles

THE ARAB ISLAND. By Freya Stark. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 1945. 236 pp. $3.50.

Reviewed by CHARLES ROLO

LAST summer in Jerusalem an Arab politician urged me to read one of Freya Stark's earlier books. "It is a most *impartial* book," he stressed, "completely sympathetic to the Arabs." Miss Stark, who shares this characteristically Mid-Eastern notion of impartiality, affirms that "The Arab Island" is "no controversial book." Her publisher wisely speaks to the contrary on the jacket, and notes that she is "unquestionably in favor of the Empire, anti-Zionist," and, he might have added, passionately, uncritically in love with the Arabs.

Clearsightedness and emotional balance have been peculiarly absent from the writings about the Middle East. In the fevered pages of Pierre Van Paasen and the Zionist pamphleteers such crucial realities as the implacable opposition of the Arab world and Palestine's economic dependence on a hostile Arab market are contemptuously flicked aside as British-invented bogeymen. The Arab experts, for their part, as though mentally unhinged by sun and sand, pursue a set of romantic mirages. Lawrence of Arabia, whose "Arab revolt" was a guerrilla sideshow; the ambiguous St. John Philby, convert to Islam, champion of Saudi imperialism and distributor for Henry Ford; aristocratic Gertrude Bell, Mata Hari of the desert; and now Freya Stark, travelling the old incense routes of the Hadhramaut in fussy London bonnets, lugging her portable cinema to the fastness of the Yemen to show newsreels in the harems of San's, tirelessly enrolling Egyptians and Iraquis into a tea-drinking "Brotherhood of Freedom" —each of them, obsessed with the Arab mystique, has given us highly colored interpretations splashed with fierce prejudice.

'The Arab Island" is a personal record of four wartime years (1939-43) spent by the author in the Arab countries as a representative of the British Government. It carries the reader from Aden through medieval Arabia; it lingers a while amid the glitter of Cairo, dipping into Egyptian politics and Egyptian homes; it moves westward into the Libyan desert to visit the proud Senussi, and then turns east to the Levant. Miss Stark lunches with General "Jumbo" Wilson on the eve of the Syrian campaign, spends a day with the Emir Abdullah of Trans-Jordan, renews a long-standing acquaintance with Syria, and devotes the last third of her book to Iraq, where she witnessed Rashid Ali's revolt.

As a travel book "The Arab Island" is wholly engrossing, brilliantly and beautifully written, the product of a warm personality and a mind richly stocked by years of intimacy with the Arabs. Miss Stark has a talent of the highest order for descriptive writing. Blessed with a poet's feeling and a painter's eye, she uses words as a painter, in complete command of his medium, uses color. She has, in addition, good taste, a gentle humor, and the discipline of a good reporter who never strays too far from the story.

Unfortunately, this is not a travel book. It is avowedly an introduction to "the Arab world as it exists today." As such it could not be more misleading or utterly wrong-headed. It gets as close to reality as the mirage to the oasis. Miss Stark has the same childish attitude toward the Arabs as Mr. Saroyan towards his "little people." Their occasional cruelty, treachery, greed, laziness, corruption, and ignorance are affectionately glossed over as manifestations of a noble innocence, a primitive virtue. Miss Stark's Arabs are just too damned cute.

This reviewer is not unacquainted with the Arabs and has just returned from a tour of the Middle East. The picture he brought back—part of it gleaned from the very British officials Miss Stark so worshipfully mentions —is dirty gray to her snowy white.

Miss Stark repeatedly emphasizes (a) the loyal contribution of the Arabs to the Allied cause; (b) the generous Arab response to the pro-Arab policy of His Majesty's Government; (c) the essentially democratic instincts of the Arabs and the rapid evolution of a democratic middle class. She is trying to prove, I suppose, that if the horrid Zionists are kept out of Palestine and the powers leave the British and the Arabs, blood brothers at heart, to work out a common destiny, all will be for the best in the best of all possible Arab Islands. Even from the standpoint of Britain's imperial interests, this is arrant nonsense. Of recent years the Arab's attitude toward the British has been closer to blackmail than to brotherly love.

Here are some of the elementary facts:

In Iraq a powerful minority staged a full-dress revolt. The Mufti's entourage in Palestine built up a first-class spy ring for the Nazis. Egypt welshed on its treaty obligation to declare war when invaded, exacted a usurious price for its unwanted cotton, and refused to switch from cotton growing to food production, which would have saved thousands of lives on the deadly convoy routes. Only a handful of Arabs voluntarily fought for the Allied cause.

Miss Stark holds that it was "chivalrous" of the Arabs not to engage in sabotage; the fact is they had mighty little chance. British and later American tanks and planes were a conclusive argument against trouble-making; British and American money was a conclusive argument for behind-the-lines coöperation. The democracy-loving Brotherhood of Freedom she makes so much of is today so unimportant that none of the Arab politicians I met, all eager to impress an American correspondent, ever bothered to mention it. The most thriving brotherhood in Egypt is the Ikhwan El Muslimin, a religious youth movement organized on fascist lines and fanatically anti-foreign.

Incidents that Miss Stark finds unpalatable she quite simply omits. Space limits me to one of a dozen possible examples: On February 4, 1942, the British Ambassador surrounded King Farouk's palace with tanks to secure acceptance of a coöperative premier; the King had dismissed Hussein Sirry Pasha for breaking relations with Vichy and was contemplating appointment of Ali Maher, all but publicly convicted of collusion with the Axis.

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Miss Stark is far too expert not to know that the pro-Nazi Grand Mufti is the hero of three-quarters of the (allegedly pro-British) Palestine Arabs. The very headlines inform her today that the young effendis to whom her book is dedicated have just unseated an Egyptian cabinet for not being sufficiently beastly to the British and have staged anti-British riots for three consecutive days in Cairo.

And what of the rise of a democratic middle class? In Egypt, the most progressive of the Arab countries except perhaps for half-Christian Lebanon, eighty percent of the population are illiterate; ninety percent are victims of hookworm and grinding poverty; ninety-five percent of the national wealth is owned by a handful of pashas and the only career for a "young effendi" is to become hanger-on to a wealthy patron. The glaring incapacity of the Arabs to grasp the meaning of democracy is interpreted by Miss Stark as a superior sort of democratic feeling which "finds no difficulty in combining with feudal forms of government since its essence lies below surface shows."

Miss Stark makes a point of saying she will not touch on the Zionist controversy and proceeds to insinuate, in addition to the genuinely telling arguments against Zionism, every absurd cliché in the Arab dictionary (which is hardly cricket).

It is a pity that the political aspects of an otherwise admirable book should be so sentimentally propagandistic. The Arabs have a great many fine and lovable qualities—and their fair share of faults. The trouble with Miss Stark is that, like a schoolgirl exposed to Valentino in "The Sheik," she sees only romantic virtues.

YOUR LITERARY I.Q. ANSWERS

1. H. C. Bunner.
2. Robert Burns.
3. Lord Byron.
4. Henry Carey.
5. Samuel T. Coleridge.
6. Emily Dickinson.
7. Oliver Wendell Holmes.
8. Thomas Hood.
9. A. E. Housman.
10. Richard Hovey.
11. John Keats.
12. Joyce Kilmer.
13. Rudyard Kipling.
14. Walter Savage Landor.
15. John Masefield.
16. Robert Louis Stevenson.
17. William Stevenson.
18. Alfred Tennyson.
19. Walt Whitman.
20. William Wordsworth.

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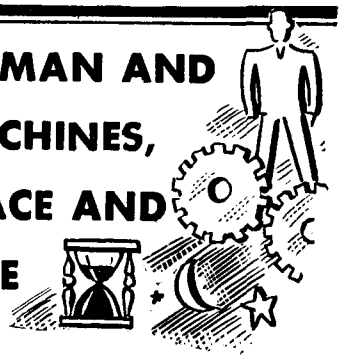
OF MAN AND MACHINES, SPACE AND TIME



Upon these four words Richard Hertz reflected:

MAN: the sole source of conscience, sole conceiver of a higher life — and the sole protagonist in world catastrophe.

MACHINES: man's Calibans, the perfect servants of his will — and the patient instruments of his own annihilation.

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NO WORLD, IF NECESSARY

(*Continued from page 8*)

or even the best exit, from our predicament.

THE present reviewer professes no competence to answer the foregoing questions, but he may at least set up a few guide posts that may keep better men from going off the path into mudholes. As Marshal Foch used to say, "*De quoi s'agit-il?*—what is the problem?" It has recently been fashionable to say that there are two problems. First, is the mere existence of the atomic bomb. Its destructive capacities are so dreadful that the only answer is to abolish war; and the only way to abolish war (this is quite a standing broad jump, but a lot of my friends have made it) is the immediate establishment of a world government—a real government, with teeth in it. The second problem, transitory but more immediately urgent, is the exclusive (for the moment) possession of the bomb by the United States. This arouses fear and suspicion among other nations, notably the Russians; the answer is to share the secret with them —with or without safeguards, according to the extent of your confidence in human nature—pending their joining with us in the establishment of the World State; following which we shall all live happily ever after.

Some observations on the first point. The atomic bomb is not the most dreadful weapon that may be employed in the next war, nor the one in whose use the United States would be at the worst disadvantage. The atomic bomb can wipe out a middle-sized city, compressing into a single instant the horrors that a B-29 fire raid spreads over some hours; but for the next city you must use another bomb, and to paralyze a continental nation you would need quite a lot of them. Biological warfare—bacterial warfare—knows no such limits, in either time or space. The influenza epidemic of 1918-19 was a mild example of what could be done by a sufficiently active agent; and such agents could be developed by any nation with adequate scientific and technical equipment, if it thought they might be useful.

They could not be used by any European nation in a European war, for the sufficient reason that a biological weapon used on the enemy would almost certainly infect one's own army, and presently one's home population. The United States could not use it against an enemy in Europe or in Asia; for we should have friends, if not allies, in those continents, who would be involved with our enemies in a common catastrophe. Biological warfare is really effective only against an island—a blockaded island, from which the infection could hardly spread. And in the next war the Western Hemisphere could conceivably be an island. . . . Well, enough of that. The point is that it is not sufficient to control the atomic bomb. What you have got to control is either the inclination of the capacity to use it—that is, the inclination or the capacity to make war, in the course of which a nation that wanted to escape destruction might use the atomic bomb, or biological warfare, or any other weapon that came to hand.

Captain Liddell Hart has lately appealed in *Harper's* for a return to the limited war of the eighteenth century. Such a return would undoubtedly give us a safer and a happier world. But eighteenth-century wars were limited because their objectives were limited; nobody but kings and their ministers really cared much about them. When there began in 1792 a war in which a people was fighting for its liberty against desperate odds, the limitations began to disappear; the French did what they had to do in order to win, and so, in due course, did everybody else. War between individual nations now seems to have become an anachronism; the one between Bolivia and Paraguay in the thirties may have been the last. Modern wars are fought for world conquest or for survival, and it is futile to expect either an aggressor to neglect anything that might bring him victory, or his victims to reject any weapon that might enable them to survive.

MOST of the discussion of the atomic bomb seems to start from the premise that atomic warfare is the worst thing imaginable. Well, it is bad enough; biological warfare would be worse; but there is something that is worse than either. The French can tell you what it is; or the Czechs, or the Greeks, or the Norwegians, or the Filipinos; it is subjection to an alien oppressor. If that is not worse than war—any kind of war—then our ancestors who fought in 1776 were wrong; and the blood of the martyrs —in Warsaw and Rotterdam and Manila, in Lidice and Kalavryta and Oradour—has been shed in vain. If

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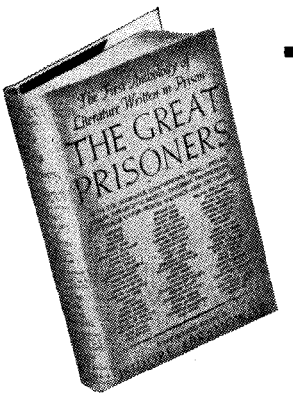
the time ever comes when men feel that liberty is not worth fighting for, then we shall have the World State; and it will pretty closely approximate Aldous Huxley's forecast.

Well, we have not got that far yet and I see no reason why we need ever get there; the point is that what you have to control is not the weapons, but the men who might use them for an evil purpose. Some of the scientists, talking about the readiness with which other nations can acquire the atomic bomb (and evidently wanting not to seem to be looking at Russia), point out that even minor industrial nations may soon be able to produce it—Sweden, for instance, or Argentina. Which makes the point.

If the Swedes announced tomorrow that they were making atomic bombs, I doubt if anybody would be much scared; for nobody supposes that the Swedish government or the nation to which it is responsible would use them for any aggressive purpose. If German scientists hiding out in Peron's Argentina started to make them, that would be something to worry about. It might be remembered that the Swedes, two hundred and fifty years ago, had all their neighbors scared; all they had to fight with, then, was pikes and muskets; but it was what they did with the pikes and muskets that made the difference. So with the atomic bomb. Is all the world shivering in terror at the fact that America has it? I see little sign of such panic except in the American liberal press. Foreigners do not seem worried, because they know we have no aggressive intentions; indeed their chief worry about America seems to be whether we have any intentions at all.

You cannot intelligently discuss the atomic bomb except against the background of present political realities; and the biggest of those realities—the biggest, most enigmatic, and most ominous—is Russia. The scientists here under discussion may have felt that this was a problem outside their field; Langmuir and Szilard, who did touch on it, contented themselves with the perhaps not too confident hope that the Russians are men of like passions with ourselves. But other persons, whose good intentions are beyond question, seem to think that the problem of Russia depends on the atomic bomb rather than (as it seems to me) quite the other way about.

By keeping the secret to ourselves, they tell us, instead of immediately passing it around, we have poisoned the world atmosphere of friendship and trust, have aroused Russian fears and suspicions, compelled the Rus-



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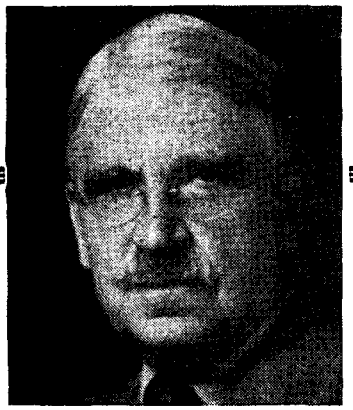

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sians to take measures for their own security. . . .

We don't seem to hear that very often lately, perhaps because the people who used to tell it have been reading the papers. For suppose that the Russians were really afraid we might use this dreadful weapon of ours, what sort of policy would they pursue? If the Russian leaders were realists—and nobody has ever accused them of being anything else—they might be expected to be as friendly and even conciliatory as is consistent with self-respect; to do their best to avoid arousing suspicion of their own intentions, to try to persuade this terrible armed colossus that the solution to world problems was to be found in a patient attempt at understanding. Instead of which they have gone around kicking at everybody's door and stepping on everybody's toes. If a man from Mars were told that one of the nations had just acquired an irresistible weapon, and were asked to guess from their foreign policies which one it was, he would say that the Russians had it, not we.

It is not the atomic bomb which has overshadowed international relations in these past months; it is the menace—the more menacing because nobody knows how much it really amounts to—of Russian aggression. . . . Ah, says your Friend of Mankind, but it is not aggression, it is only the search for security. . . . Security against whom? This is not 1941; Hitler is dead, the Wehrmacht is pulverized. In all the triple continent of Eurasia-Africa—the World Island, Mackinder called it—there is no force that could stop the Russian Army; nor is any likely to arise, in our time. Security against us, and the atomic bomb? But the Russians know geography; they do not protect themselves against us in Kars and Azerbaijan. What they are doing looks very much like what Peter the Great and Catherine and the first Nicholas used to do, with no pretense that they were looking for security against the atomic bomb or anything.

So what? Only this, that the Russians do not behave like people to whom we could safely confide the secret of the bomb. Maybe they have got one of their own, or are on the way to getting it; if so, we can't help it. But we can—and apparently, thank God, we intend to—avoid the suicidal folly of giving away what we have until there have been established those "effective, reciprocal, and enforceable safeguards" that Truman, Attlee, and Mackenzie King have called for. The problem of the bomb is no longer what it will do—we know that—but who would use it for what purposes; a political problem, calling for a political solution.

JUST what we have been telling you, say my friends triumphantly; the only answer is the world state. Anything else means balance of power, an atomic arms race, ultimate catastrophe. . . . Well, we have not sufficiently explored other possibilities to be sure of that; anyway, what does the world state mean? It could mean a number of things; but one thing it must mean if it is to be a world government at all—it must have an armed force big enough to lick the armed forces of any single one, or any probable combination, of

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Lions in the Night

(After August 6, 1945)

By Eric Wilson Barker

UNDER the glass of Science, thus revealed:
Defenseless World, stripped in a pitiless hour,
Bearing no armor now, nor any word,
Naked against the sun, without a shield.
What now avails it in the dangerous night
To bar the shutters and make fast the door?
Our strong stone house is vulnerable as a tent
To claws that breach the canvas at a stroke:—
Shivering before the night's two burning eyes,
Waiting the pounce that rends us, we have woke,
Only to hear the wind, the sacred heart's comforter,
Twitching the creeper leaves against the wall,
And all the vibrant voices of the dark
Mounting their shrill crescendo above the hammering pulse;
For we had dreamed of lions in the night, and heard the roar
That shook the weathered rooftree of the house,
Making its mortised stanchions give and bend.

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its component states. *Quis custodiet ipsos custodes?* No doubt that question must, and perhaps will, be answered some day; but I can think of no satisfactory answer against the background of present political realities. (Ely Culbertson talks more sense on this point than anybody. else; but he plays a good game of bridge, so nobody listens to him.)

It is argued that to combine the nations of the world into a federal state, with plenty of home rule for its component units, would require an effort differing only in degree, not in kind, from that required to federate the thirteen original states of this Union. But those states, whatever their differences, had a common language for all public affairs, even if some of the inhabitants spoke Dutch or German at home; more important, they had a common background of English political institutions, political traditions, and political thinking. The planet as a whole is somewhat more complex. Conceivably, by a good deal of wrenching and twisting, we might federate everybody but Russia and its satellites; but a world state that left out the Russian bloc would mean two world states, and a rivalry whose probable outcome anyone can predict.

Why not Russia? Not because of its economic system; I should think there would be no insuperable difficulty in adjusting that to the various economic systems of other states. It is the Russian political system that is the obstacle—the totalitarian police state, with few civic liberties and no popular controls; with a blank curtain that not only cuts off the rest of the world from more than the scantiest knowledge of what goes on in Russia, but (much more serious) keeps the Russian people from finding out what is going on in the rest of the world, except as their government chooses to tell them; a monolithic state, all of whose resources can be mobilized and directed toward whatever end may be determined by the small group of resolute and secretive men who run the country. If Pennsylvania, say, had been such a state in 1787, and if Delaware and Maryland, under somewhat similar systems, always voted the way Pennsylvania told them to, our federal government could never have got started.

It would be hard to fit such a state into a world federation, even if the objectives of its leaders were clear. Unfortunately they are not; all we can be sure of is that Russia at present seems to be what is called a "dynamic" state. Germany was dynamic under Hitler, the United States was dynamic under James K. Polk, and

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neither was a comfortable neighbor. (No, never mind that beam that once protruded from our own eye; we are trying to solve a problem of 1946, not of 1846; and it doesn't help much to say that maybe in another hundred years the Russians, too, will have settled down.)

And one thing more, the last and worst—this monolithic nation is also the home office of a world religion, with adherents in almost every component state of the federation. Look at the behavior of the Communist minorities in the "united fronts" of the eastern European states; or ask any American labor-union official how much trouble even a few Communists can make for him. They would use the same tactics, make the same kind of trouble, in a world state. . . . No, I do not think that Communism must win in any contest with democracy; not at all. What I am afraid of is that there would be no contest; that the democrats, convinced that, whatever our minor differences, we were all working for the same ends, would trust their associates to feel the same way and would go on about their business while the Communists, with the zeal of true believers, would go on working all the time to insure the triumph of their faith. Just that has happened over and over again in labor unions; it could happen in a world union, too.

No world state like that, thank you; the alternative may be perilous, but at least, choosing the alternative, we know enough to be on our guard. A year or so ago most of us supposed that Russian objectives, in the main, were the same as ours; and extensive concessions were made to them on that hypothesis. It now seems to have been mistaken; we do not want another disillusionment, on a grander scale, which might come too late. Possibly the Russians want the same things we want, but let us wait for a little more evidence. Time is short, say the atomic scientists, and sur-

The Criminal Record

The Saturday Review's Guide to Detective Fiction

Title and Author	*Crime, Place and Sleuth*	*Summing Up*	*Verdict*
THE HORIZONTAL MAN *Helen Eustis* (Harper: $2.50)	Fatal bludgeoning of philandering professor at New England girl's college involves students, reporters, faculty, and perceptive psychiatrist.	Full marks in all categories . . . writing, suspense, humor, characterization, psychology, detecting horror . . . for this gorgeous job of mystification.	By all means read it!
HE WHO WHISPERS *John Dickson Carr* (Harper: $2.)	Stab wound kills man in medieval French tower. Girl almost scared to death in England. Enter Dr. Gideon Fell . . .	Another impssible crime, with adroit supernatural embroidery, cannily unravelled by Dr. F. in deft combination of shivers and skilful sleuthing.	Required reading.
CONTACT MERCURY *Leonard H. Nason* (Doubleday: $2.50)	Lt. Col. Eadie leaves front in France during closing months of war to shepherd scientist to Paris . . . with spectacular results.	Nason fans will remember Eadie from World War I days . . . His recent adventures are just as entertaining and exciting.	Top-grade spy stuff.
DELIVER ME FROM EVA *Paul Bailey* (Murray and Gee: $2.)	Messy mass murders in outlandish California mansion finally stopped by "conservative" but impressionable young man.	Legless and earless scientist who does strange things with skulls rules bizarre household until 'orrible doom overtakes him.	Silly

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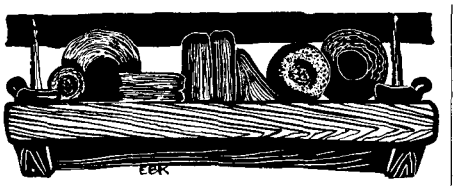
vival is at stake. Well, survival is at stake both ways; another war would be a catastrophe for all concerned—especially for the losers. But the wrong kind of world state would be a catastrophe for the winners, as well as the losers.

Mr. Norman Cousins, in a striking figure, has compared our present plight to that of a man standing on the edge of a canyon, ten feet wide but abysmally deep, with a forest fire coming up behind him and safety on the other side. He has never jumped ten feet in his life, he doesn't know whether he can do it now; but he had better do it, and do it quickly. . . . But suppose, when the smoke blows aside so that he can see more clearly—and we can see somewhat more clearly now than when Mr. Cousins wrote that last fall—he perceives that the canyon is not ten feet wide but forty. It might then make sense, so long as the forest fire is not actually licking at the seat of his pants, to see if there isn't some other way out before he tries that standing broad jump.



I cannot see the way out, yet; but I am willing to go on looking a while before we try to jump forty feet. One world or none, say the atomic scientists. Has it occurred to them that if their one world turned out to be totalitarian and obscurantist, we might better have no world at all?

In the Grand Coulee Country

STILL TO THE WEST. By Nard Jones. New York: Dodd, Mead & Company. 1946. 268 *pp.* $2.75.

Reviewed by STEWART HOLBROOK

THE building of the gigantic dam at Grand Coulee on the Columbia River has inspired almost as much writing in the Pacific Northwest as the subject of covered wagon days; and now Mr. Jones, who knows the region as well as any other man, has done a novel in which the conception and building and social effects of the dam are used as background. The story centers in Ellen O'Malley, granddaughter of a pioneer, who has married a man of her own wheat-farming class but finds, for reasons never very clear, that she doesn't want to be a farmer's wife and specifically not the wife of her husband, Victor Hammond, who is no rustic dolt but certainly no charmer. Ellen presently meets one David Morse, this reviewer's candidate for the heel supreme, and they are immediately attracted to each other. The affair soon leads to a baby. The denouement you will find in the book.

Mr. Jones is perfectly at home in his scene, which he knows from first hand residence, and with the history of the country and of the dam itself. Realistic pictures of the Big Bend region, with its alternating patches of yellow wheat and brown fallow, of the odd town of Walla Walla and its Whitman College, of Spokane and its Davenport Hotel (even to its washed money) — these and other scenes, reported with complete realism, will take the admiration of the reader who knows them from his own experience. So, too, will the flashbacks into the history of the region, incidents remembered by Grandpa O'Malley or his colleagues, things like the dreadful massacre of the Whitmans, the great days of the mining booms, of steamboating and stage-coaching. And the reader will leave the book with a better understanding of the big dam and what it is likely to mean in the lives of the present younger generation of Eastern Washington.

It is questionable if Mr. Jones's readers, of which he has a great number, and staunch ones, too, will consider this his best novel. It is much lighter in content than his "Swift Flows the River." It is less pungent than his "Oregon Detour." It is less scandalous than his "Scarlet Petticoat." What it is, it seems to me, is a competent piece of fiction.

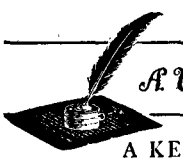
MARCH 16 I.Q. ANSWERS

(Accidentally omitted, the March 16 I.Q. answers are given below.)

1. "King Lear," by William Shakespeare.
2. "Lord Ullin's Daughter," by Thomas Campbell.
3. "Rappaccini's Daughter," by Nathaniel Hawthorne.
4. "The Cricket on the Hearth," by Charles Dickens.
5. "Dear Brutus," by James M. Barrie.
6. "Elsie Dinsmore," by Martha Finley.
7. "Silas Marner," by George Eliot.
8. "Gone with the Wind," by Margaret Mitchell.
9. "Ballad of the Tempest," by James T. Fields.
10. "The Wreck of the Hesperus," by Henry W. Longfellow.

"BEFORE me as I write there lies a letter that would delight any collector—if only it were authentic; a letter from John Paul Jones to Thomas Jefferson . . . The paper is genuine 18th century paper, the color of the ink appears right, the handwriting looks as genuine as anything John Paul Jones ever wrote. A very distinguished American collector, who . . . knew American history extremely well, apparently thought it was genuine. But the simplest of Miss Benjamin's tests would have proved it otherwise. The chapter on forgeries is itself a whole bunch of keys . . ."

Julian Boyd, *Librarian of Princeton,* in the foreword



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	Balance Realism	*Surface*	
WHITE, SEA CHANTEY Edna Phillips, harp. String Quintet. Eugene Ormandy Columbia X 259 $2.50	Beautifully balanced job, each instrument ultra-clear.	A	Slight, well-written settings of sea chanteys. Double bass adds body to ensemble.
CHOPINIANA Mitropoulos, Robin Hood Dell Orch. Columbia M 598 (3) $3.50	Very dull recording, weak perspective. Solo instruments inaudible.	A	Assorted Chopin arr. big orch. Some effective, most grossly overblown.
BACH, SONATA IN E, violin & Clavier obbl. Menuhin, Landowska. Victor M 1035 (3) $3.50	Good reverberation; makes violin sound big. Balance OK.	B+	Somehow nervous and ill at ease. Two unmixable virtuosi. Not too successful collaboration. (See below)
MILLAY (Edna St. Vincent Millay in readings from her poems.) Victor M 836 (4) $4.50			(No copies available at press time. Try your local dealer.)
ANTHOL. ENGLISH LYRIC VERSE Cornelia Otis Skinner (with music bridges) Victor M 810 (3) $3.50			

THERE is no doubt in my mind that Landowska is the greatest living exponent of the harpsichord, an instrument which I have taken seriously for a long time, and whose increasing acceptance as an everyday musical necessity gives me satisfaction. Landowska was the first to bring the instrument to the notice of serious musicians—she is largely responsible for the current upswing in the harpsichord market. And more, Landowska, quite aside from the harpsichord itself, is one of those timeless dramatic artists who rise above and beyond their instrument, and beyond any previously conceivable interpretation of the mere music composed for it.

But by this very token she is (like Toscanini) an eccentric. Her interpretations are unique and inimitable—and often quite false to the original music, written for the playing of ordinary musicians. In a work like the Bach "Chromatic Fantasia" or the Goldberg "Variations" Landowska is supernatural, to match the music. No one can approach her. But in a more earthy piece like the Bach B flat "Partita" (V M 323) she is merely theatrical. The Landowska approach (even on the harpsichord) is romantic—dramatic, highly personal, virtuoso in style. It is almost impossible for her to allow a simple piece to follow its own natural course, unadorned, and, even more, to subordinate herself as equal partner with another virtuoso. This is as it should be, for she is too great an artist for any sort of reasoned coöperation.

All of which is evident in the recording of the early Bach E major violin sonata. This is music to be played straightforwardly and simply. It speaks for itself. There is no place for the bewitching effects of phrasing, rhythm, and registration that are Landowska's special gift. She knows it, and though her reading is technically correct, one feels an uneasiness, even a certain nervousness, that says perfectly plainly, here is Landowska at a disadvantage, out of her element. Menuhin too—the romantic violinist—though he does his best job to date in Bach, is also, with the best will in the world, a fish out of water. And there is a certain air of religious awe about the proceedings that is annoying—this is not the St. Matthew Passion Bach, after all.

As a contrast to Landowska I recommend Ralph Kirkpatrick, whose Musicraft album "Harpsichord Recital" (Mus 25) is, especially as to microphoning, the best yet produced. It includes a "straightforward" "Chromatic Fantasia" to compare with Landowska's.

Meanwhile I shall keep the Landowska-Menuhin album and play it often in spite of what seem to me its minor faults.

EDWARD TATNALL CANBY.

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The Goings On of Mr. Embers

EMBERS. By Frank Baker. New York: Coward-McCann. 1946. 213 *pp.* $2.50.

Reviewed by SARA HENDERSON HAY

THIS is the strange and tragic story of Mr. Embers, a Tom o' Bedlam, a Shakespearian clown of a fellow who appears from nowhere to take up his lodging in the tumbledown cricket pavilion of Pennington Court, near Foxham, forty miles from London. Judge Pennington and his kindly, fluttering wife Alvina couldn't make him out, but they defended him against the ill-will and suspicion of the villagers and surreptitiously helped him with small presents of food for himself and the five cats, Seraphita, Hermes, Macaber, Bogle, and Pamphyle, who shared his cheerless, heatless quarters. Not that Mr. Embers ever appeared to accept their charity, except for the cats. He had a pension from somewhere, and he punctiliously presented the Judge with a postal order, accompanied with a card "Mr. Thomas Trevelyan Embers presents his compliments to His Honor Judge Noel Pennington, C.B.E. and begs to be allowed to enclose one week's rent for the use of the pavilion. Receipt unnecessary. Under two pounds." The food they left at his doorway remained uneaten, or was given away. He apparently lived on small bits of things he purchased at the shops in Foxham, and on the airy stuff of dreams. In his closet he kept a bottle of Tokay and a box of chocolate biscuits, purchased in 1905, and he was waiting for Edna to come to dinner. Judge Pennington learned through inquiries here and there that Embers had been a promising young barrister, and that the Edna for whom he waited was the girl who had jilted him for a richer man. This tragedy in his youth had turned Thomas Embers into a wanderer, a man who deliberately forsook rationality for irrationality. "He had built up, piece by piece, a being who, in the end, should become foreign even to himself . . . he had almost succeeded in creating a Thomas Embers so strange that even his own integral personality failed to recognize him . . . in smoothing the futility of existence with a many-sided, many-colored covering."

It was inevitable, of course, for the purposes of the story, that the real Edna should finally turn up, a guest of the Penningtons. She was now the widowed Mrs. Chavasse, who had kept through the years her burden of guilt for her faithlessness to her early love, her betrayal of herself as well as Thomas. Their meeting, the ultimate tragedy of their recognition, and Embers's clinging for defence to his madness, which the reader is never quite sure is genuine or feigned, is a harrowing and memorable scene.

There are lighter moments to the book, however. Occasionally Mr. Baker out-Thirkells Angela Thirkell in his descriptions of the good-hearted, vague, slightly stuffy, pleasantly cultivated English provincials, portrayed with gentle satire and deft humor and that honéyed sting of sly wit. The Christmas party at Pennington Court is a masterpiece of delightful comedy, with the underlying poignance and sympathy which makes all the difference between fun and ridicule.

"Embers" is essentially a tragic story, however. And it is a baffling and not wholly satisfying work. One feels that the fey Thomas Embers does not quite succeed in embodying that "divinest sense" of madness. Disturbing he certainly is, and the implications of his madness are profound and deep. But the metaphysical questions, "What is sanity?" "What is truth?" "What is man's essential wisdom?" are not answered in him. "Embers" is a provocative, moving, beautifully written story, a "Winter's Tale," delicate and macabre. But it is also like music ending on an unresolved chord, leaving the hearer still in air, vaguely unsatisfied.

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The Quarterly announces a short story contest with a prize award of $100 for an original story to be submitted by June 1, 1946. Judges: Frederick L. Allen, Editor, *Harper's Magazine;* Norman Cousins, Editor, *The Saturday Review of Literature;* Norman Macleod, Editor, *Briarcliff Quarterly.* For details write to the College.

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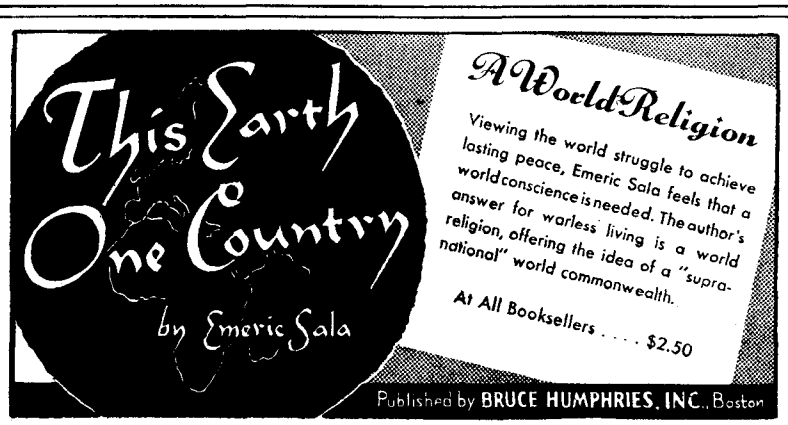
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the Phoenix Nest

BALLADE FOR A SIXTIETH BIRTHDAY

THAN all joy's slow erosion
By critics cold and queer,
Rather the loud explosion,
The hale and hearty jeer,
The rude abrupt Bronx cheer,
The razzberry ripely twirled,
That battle-cry *sans* peer,
"I'll tell the Cockeyed World!"

Then here's to rich emotion,
To whisky and to beer,
To love's enchanted potion
That brings the glittering tear!
The starry dark I fear,
Yet life is lovely-girled.
The world is mad? That's clear,
I'll tell the Cockeyed World!

From John o'Groat's to Goshen
(I.e. The Far and Near)
In beauty like an ocean
(No wailing on the mere!)
I still cavort like Lear
(Edward, not King!) I'm erled
And spinning on my ear?
I'll tell the Cockeyed World!

L'Envoi

Prince, how's about this here,
In re defiance hurled?
Before we're truly sere,
Let's Tell the Cockeyed World!

* * *

In a grand poem not yet published in this country (whose title I am not at liberty to divulge) there's a burning chapter on the Industrial Revolution in England. A lot of it applies in America today, though working conditions are somewhat better. These lines, for instance: employers speaking:

"The unwanted overplus
Should lay the blame on Adam—
not on us!"

Until we feel that unemployment is a national disgrace, we'll never know what it is to be civilized.

I lay the blame on Adam, all right —on Adam Smith!

* * *

Christopher Morley speaks to me of "that delicious book of reminiscence by Edward Marsh, published about 1938, the last of the old Georgian suavities and simnel cake," and reminds me of Eddie Marsh's prize-winning piece for a competition way back in '31, in the *Week-End Review*, the idea of which was to repair the obvious omission in *Paradise Lost*, Book IV, that Adam and Eve went to bed without brushing their teeth—as follows:

From Sir Edward Marsh, *A Number of People*, (1939) *p.* 27:

[and eased the putting off
These troublesom disguises which wee wear,]
Yet pretermitted not the strait Command,
Eternal, indispensable, to off-cleanse
From their white elephantin Teeth the stains
Left by those tastie Pulps that late they chewd
At supper. First from a salubrious Fount
Our general Mother, stooping, the pure Lymph
Insorb'd, which, mingled with tart juices prest
From pungent Herbs, on sprigs of Myrtle smeard,
(Then were not brushes) scrub'd gumms more impearl'd
Than when young *Telephus* with *Lydia* strove
In mutual bite of Shoulder and ruddy Lip.
This done (by *Adam* too no less) the pair
[Straight side by side were laid.]

* * *

For the Fiftieth Anniversary of "A Shropshire Lad" comes the following from a well-known Canadian-American writer:

THE SHROPSHIRE POET

His straitened days were brighter made by song,
By staves that left the dark road often splendid
Yet touched with sadness at the thought how long
Must be his sleep with all the music ended.

Bravely he sang, but on his happiest strains
There hung the cloud of that unknown Tomorrow.
They now have met, and only song remains,
Made richer by the final gift of sorrow.

ARTHUR STRINGER.

* * *

"A Fleet Streeter," of Cincinnati, Ohio, postalcards me:

Re Sir Edwin Arnold: His poem, "He and She" (right title, I think) is one of the most beautiful and affecting poems of Death in the language. Look it up. Many, too many, years ago I used to see Sir Edwin often at night as he was leaving the *Daily Telegraph* office. Odd little figure. Quite different from his huge confrere George Augustas Sala, of the red nose and red tie.

* * *

And opines Earle Walbridge:

If you saw the new FBI film thriller, "The House on 92d Street," did you recognize the 59th Street bookshop, re-labeled "Lange's Book Shop," where the FBI agent went seeking Spencer's "First Principles?" It's the Carol Cox bookshop, one of the best hunting-grounds on the street. My own copy of "Trilby" came by mail from Mr. Cox thirty years ago: he was then on 125th Street.

* * *

From Placentia, California appears the following,—and do you remember how Shelley once wrote a poem on a "little downy owl" called "Aziola"? Mary had to tell him it was an owl! I am printing this just as it came in.

THE LITTLE OWL WITH THE HICCUPS

When shadows whisper my garden to hush
And only the crickets have failed to hark
He may pause in thought on my tall rose bush
And concentrate a-while there before dark.

FRASER YOUNG'S LITERARY CRYPT: No. 145

A cryptogram is writing in cipher. Every letter is part of a code that remains constant throughout the puzzle. Answer No. 145 *will be found in the next issue.*

KBCALNLTGPPM BDH

EBDHCGPF BN WBBX OLPP

GCBLCA GCX THBOC

KHLRGAZ ZCAZHKHLFZ GCX

PGLFFZV NGLHZ.

O. H. SZCZA—FGADHXGM

HZRLZO BN PLAZHGADHZ

———

Answer to Literary Crypt No. 144

Ulster for a soldier, Connaught for a thief,
Munster for learning, and Leinster for beef.

—G. BORROW—
Wild Wales.

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He utters no sound from his shadowed perch,
This hackneyed little feathered paradigm,
But frequently his tiny shoulders pitch
And heave with the hiccups that harry him.

I would be happier if I could know
That his affliction springs from some comestible
For all my feeble effort seems to show
That thought's the thing that is so indigestible.

FLORENCE EMERSON HONEY.

* * *

Lewis Worthington Smith of Des Moines, Iowa, a poet whose work I have long known, and a teacher of note, bursts forth as follows:

JOHN DOE REMARKS

Oh, glorious is our manager
At a thousand bucks a week,
As glamorous as a tanager
With pouncing claw and beak.
We rivet, forge, we little men,
At half of one against his ten.

The world is so constructed,
Our ways are so allied,
That we are well instructed
To find in him our pride;
For he is ours, we made him so.
We turn the lights on for the show.

There may be twists and changes.
Who knows but we may yet
Find succulent pasture—ranges
For daylong toil and sweat;
So now, if we must live in hell
And call it heaven, 'tis very well.

* * *

And then there's Charles Christopher Mierow, who is professor of biography on the Ambrose White Vernon Foundation, at Carleton College, Northfield, Minnesota. He "hopefully submits" the following:

To those who are interested in the fascinating work of research in the field of the sources of folk songs, this precursor of a well-known ballad of these modern times (namely, the touching verses which tell of Mary and her William Goat, their happy life and pitiable death) cannot fail to be a treasure.

Though the manuscript bears no name upon it, the poem would seem by all indications to be the work of no less famous and worthy an author than one whom our own Spenser has called "the well of English undefiled"—Geoffrey Chaucer:

MARIE AND HER WILLIAM GOOT

Bifil that, in the olden tyme I wot
(Forthe that now such things happen not),
A mayde there ben that was yclept Marie.
She was ful fair and beautiful to see,
And therewithal her tenderness was grete:
The litel briddes played about her feete,
And eek the lambes and the puppy dogges;
She loved ev'n the dirty litel hogges!

This Marie had a goot, a darling thinge,
William yclept, and oh! how he could singe!
This goot was not like others goots, I thinke,
For that his inward parts were lined with Zinke!
Therewith he hadde an appetite withal
It was a verray marveil unto al:
An oyster-can that lay there in the dirtes
He ate, and eke a clothesline ful of shirtes!

A clothes line ful of shirts could harme no manne,
But oh! alas! alack! the oyster canne!
This can was filled with dynamite also
(Poor Bill dyde think it cheese, as you shall know).
He ate the shirts, they pleasèd him aright,
He ate the can, and eke the dynamite;
Then layde him down to rest at Marie's side,
(Poor Marie wist not what would soon betide).

Ther came, alas! an awful sound, a crashe,
The William Goot exploded al to smashe,
And Marie—wel, it al was for the beste—
She entered with her playmate into reste.

* * *

With this final tribute to atomic energy, I leave you.

WILLIAM ROSE BENÉT

The Phoenix Nest for March 16 erroneously identified C. L. Sulzberger as "son of the publisher of The New York Times." *This should have read "nephew."*

For Tense Folks

MASTERING YOUR NERVES. By Larry Freeman and Edith M. Stern. New York: Harper & Brothers. 1946. 247 *pp.* $2.

Reviewed by BERTRAM D. LEWIN, M.D.

IT would be interesting to know how much and what is accomplished by books that instruct us in mastering or outwitting our mind or our nerves. The present one is designed for "normal" people, who are "neurotic too." It recommends action and relaxation in efficient forms as cures for nervous tension. It makes suggestions as to what functions can serve as outlets; it tells how to get the most out of play and work, advises letting off verbal steam, has some special remarks to help make the love life relaxing, and gives a scheme of a well-balanced life. The basic idea behind this advice is sound enough, *viz.*, that stimuli produce tension if there is insufficient outlet. But the therapy inferred from this principle is far too diagrammatic to be more than on the aspirin or daily dozen level.

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DOUBLE-CROSTIC NO. 627

DEFINITIONS

A. A codfish of Kamchatka and Alaska.

B. Irish-born American painter, esp. of portraits (1796-1863).

C. French pirate who helped the Americans at New Orleans in War of 1812.

D. Midwest father and two sons connected with U.S. politics (19th and 20th cents.)

E. English forger of Shakespearean manuscripts (1777-1835.)

F. Jet of steam that issues from the ground in volcanic regions (It.)

G. Dusk.

H. To level.

I. Hungarian-born violinist in U.S. (1892-).

J. Smart tap or stamp of the foot in fencing (Fr.)

K. Goddess of peace and one of the Hours (Gr. Myth.)

L. Snowiness.

M. A President of the U.S.

N. English critic, son-in-law of Thackeray and father of Virginia Woolf (1832-1904).

O. Character in "Romeo and Juliet."

P. Manes worship.

Q. Kind of violet with yellow or white flowers, often called adder's tongue.

R. Young American poet killed in World War I.

S. Any of the members composing a proportion or ratio (Math.)

T. To present or use again in another form.

U. Tragedy by Racine, based on Euripides (1667).

V. Its capital is Wellington.

W. Zoroastrian fire-worshiper still extant in Persia.

X. Collective name applied somewhat vaguely to India, Indo-China, and Malay Archipelago.

Y. A renaissance; revival.

Z. Young cod or haddock cooked the Boston way in strips cut across the grain.

WORDS

79 103 148 115 129 153

139 154 58 134 100 53

164 107 47 157 72 68 80

118 163 145 63 138 31 44 20 27 185

76 49 116 32 126 101 130

142 52 92 171 131 10 57 82

156 5 146 73 85 112 173 158

132 180 140 70 86 39 174 11 135

28 179 65 74 106 149 167

35 12 16 98 43

119 99 109 181 141

94 56 59 33 46 136 172 4

62 178 50 96

19 108 123 71 2 168 90

66 38 105 24 125 18 177

36 6 61 51 41 17 13 124 81 155

37 95 184 114 170 40 175 159

169 3 8 104 21 137

133 117 143 77

22 147 29 111 45 84

128 127 102 64 91 152 48 161 162 15

67 55 34 120 89 176 14 93 26 151

182 69 160 54 113 7

144 121 78 1 165 9 87 25 183

75 150 122 60 88 166 97

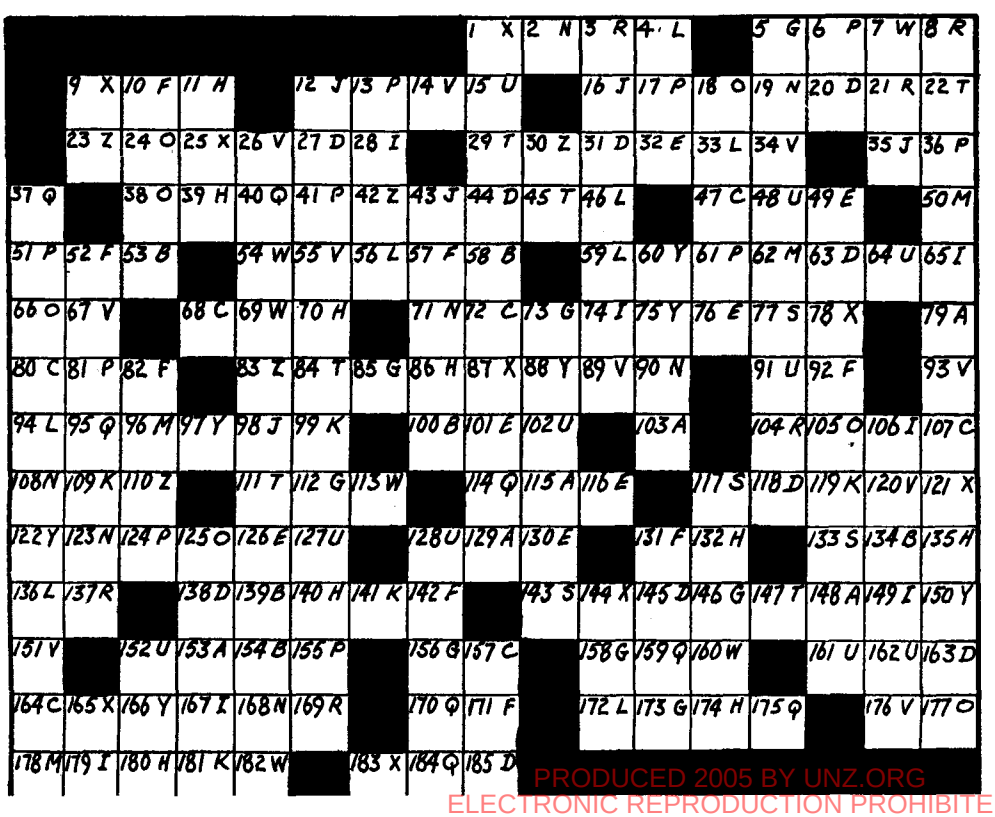
23 83 110 30 42

DIRECTIONS

To solve this puzzle you must guess twenty-odd words, the definitions of which are given in the column headed DEFINITIONS. The letters in each word to be guessed are numbered. These numbers appear under the dashes in the column headed WORDS. There is a dash for each letter in the required word. The key letters in the squares are for convenience, indicating to which word in the definitions each letter in the diagram belongs. When you have guessed a word, fill it in on the dashes; then write each letter in the correspondingly numbered square of the puzzle diagram. When the squares are all filled in you will find (by reading from left to right) a quotation from a famous author. Read up and down the letters mean nothing. The black squares indicate ends of words; words do not necessarily end at the right side of the diagram.

When the column headed WORDS is filled in, the initial letters spell the name of the author and the title of the piece from which the quotation has been taken. Authority for spelling and definitions is Webster's New International Dictionary (second edition).

The solution of last week's *Double-Crostic* will be found on page 35 of this issue.



The Crostics Club

By Elizabeth S. Kingsley

HERE is a belated accumulation from our rhymesters. First, Mrs. Frank Fourt, Ventura, Calif.:

Good bye, say I, to the bombycid moth
The roc, the ratel, and the three-toed sloth,
And along with these goes Peer Gynt's mother
With a Hebrew prophet and Odin's brother.
The ruler of Tibet and a beetle elater
Will fall into step with the P.G. mater
With the tyrants of Rome and the Gods of Greece
With their battles of war and their treaties of peace.
All these have I woven row on row
In cross-word puzzles since long ago,
And with none of them am I now vexed
But the Double-Crostics have me hexed.

Next, the Rev. George Roberts, West Hartford, Conn.:

Ah yes, 'twas a beauty,
That odd word *gomuti*
In Crostic of 617,
But the added words *Phil. I*
Were perplexing until one
Could only ask, "What does that mean?
Perchance 'tis some demon
In Paul to Philemon,
Or Philippians chapter the first."
So one worried and wondered
And questioned and pondered,
And looked for and feared for the worst;
Till at last one arose with delight and with smiles,
Having guessed what was meant was the
Philippine Isles.

Now Sherwood J. Larned, Saugerties, N. Y.:

Tell us not of Crostics Number
Nineteen, Twenty changing places.
Where is Eighteen? Does it slumber?
Has it sunk and left no traces?

When last summer, Prof. Mary Elizabeth Osborn, Hood College, Md., tried to express her feelings about unkeyed words, "I remembered a bit of 'Ash Wednesday,'" she writes, "and laughed to think how apt some of T. S. Eliot's phrasing is—if irreverently—applied to unkeyed words":

If the last word is lost, if the spent
word is spent,
If the unheard, unspoken
Word is unspoken, unheard;
Still is the unspoken word the Word unheard,
The Word without a word . . . . . .
Against the Word the unstilled world still whirled
About the center of the silent Word.
O my people, what have I done unto thee!

Now I realize why I have never given you T. S. Eliot's verses for DC's.

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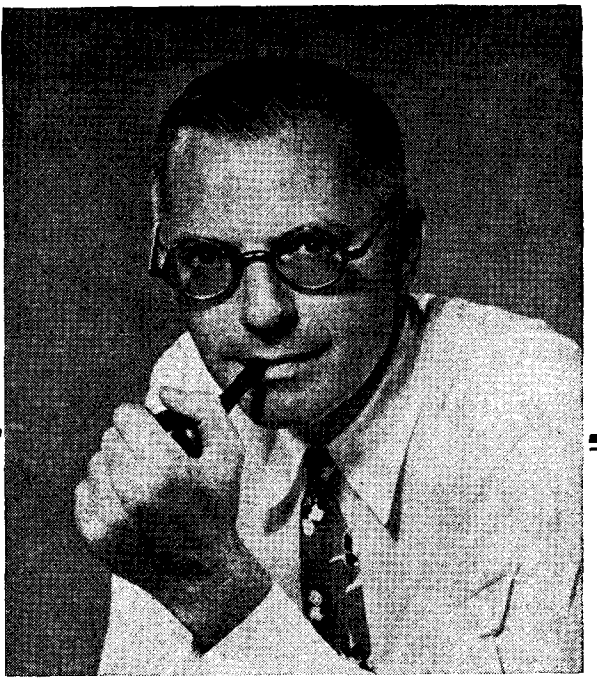

BENNETT CERF, President of Random House and The Modern Library; author of Try and Stop Me, Laughing Stock, *etc., and of the Saturday Review column, "Trade Winds"*

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